United Nations S/PV.4258

Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

4258th meeting

Thursday, 18 January 2001, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Jayakumar	(Singapore)
Members:	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Ireland	Mr. Cooney
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Mali	Mr. Toure
	Mauritius	Mr. Neewoor
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchynski
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Holbrooke

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

01-21740 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Sweden and Yugoslavia in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mladenović (Yugoslavia) took a seat at the Council table and Mr. Schori (Sweden) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Guéhenno to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I call on Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

Mr. Guéhenno (*spoke in French*): It is a pleasure for me to give members of the Security Council an update on developments in Kosovo since the previous briefing in mid-December. Before I begin my briefing, I should like to remind the Council that Mr. Kouchner has now left Pristina, and his successor, the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Hans Haekkerup, has taken up his post. I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Mr. Kouchner, who, with the great ability, dedication and energy for which he is known, mobilized people in very difficult circumstances to establish the interim administration in Kosovo in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999).

I should first like to speak about the joint interim administrative institutions. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has continued its work to create inclusive local administrative structures. To ensure that there is a political foundation for this work, the outgoing Special Representative reminded Kosovo's residents that they are responsible for building a tolerant society. He called on Kosovo's political leaders to use their influence to reject intolerance and put an end to extremism, and he stressed that Kosovo Albanians risk squandering much of the goodwill of the international community unless they stop ethnically motivated killings and political violence in general.

The Kosovo Transitional Council (KTC) has been enlarged, and further enlargement is planned to make it as representative as possible of all of the political, religious and ethnic communities of Kosovo. Three new members participated in the KTC meeting on 10 January, one from the Party of the Liberal Centre, one from the Bosniac Party of Democratic Action of Kosovo and one from the Democratic Party of Albanian Ashkalija in Kosovo. These parties draw their political support from different minority communities, including the Kosovo Bosniacs, the Ashkalija and the Gorani, respectively. The Interim Administrative Council — the IAC — structure has yet to be reformed. Other changes will take into account the results of the 28 October municipal elections, which enabled the United Nations Mission to gauge more precisely the popularity of the various political parties on a Kosovo-wide basis.

The Special Representative chaired the two meetings of the Council of Joint Interim Administrative Structure Co-Heads. The main objective of the Council is to increase cooperation between the various administrative departments.

On 10 January, the first meeting of the UNMIK working group on the legal and institutional framework for Kosovo-wide elections was held. It was attended by Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serb experts designated

by the IAC. It focused mainly on proposals for the functions and composition of a provisional assembly and on an appropriate electoral formula for the Kosovo-wide elections. The date for those elections will be set once the legal framework has been developed by the Special Representative.

The Assemblies in the 27 municipalities where the election results were certified are now fully established. The three committees — dealing with policy, finance, and communities and mediation — have been established in 12 Assemblies. In eight others, the process of setting up these committees is under way. However, the process of setting up the municipal administrations has been complicated in some municipalities by the deliberate politicization of the process for selecting high-level municipality officials by the two major Kosovo Albanian political parties. This has partially undermined UNMIK's effort to develop effective democratic municipal assemblies.

In the three Kosovo municipalities where Serbs constitute the majority, Serb representatives have been appointed to the Assemblies by the Special Representative. However, the inclusion of Kosovo Serbs in Assemblies in areas where Serbs are not in the majority remains a problem. The Special Representative has met with representatives of the Kosovo Serb community. Negotiations have been complicated, however, by demands from some Kosovo Serb leaders that their communities be allowed to set up their own distinct municipal structures, separate and distinct from the elected Assemblies. This was rejected by UNMIK as being contrary to resolution 1244 (1999).

I should like to say a few words about the Gracanica Assembly. On 30 December, the Serb National Council-Gracanica held its year-end meeting. The Gracanica Assembly reaffirmed its willingness to participate in all of UNMIK's Kosovo-wide institutions, while at the same time strongly criticizing Belgrade-based Serb leaders and their representatives in Kosovo who continued their policy of non-cooperation with UNMIK. The Gracanica Assembly expressed concern over respect for the law and the effective setting up of law-enforcement procedures, as well as recent Kosovo sales of property belonging to Serbs, which, according to the Assembly, were made under duress. UNMIK is considering a range of possible administrative recourses.

On 14 December, UNMIK and representatives of the Government of Yugoslavia met to discuss the matter of detainees and missing persons. The meeting focused on practical arrangements for family visits in prisons under Belgrade's authority and in those under UNMIK's authority. Yugoslavian representatives also asked that their medical personnel be authorized to conduct medical examinations of Serb prisoners held in Kosovo detention facilities before family visits. Yugoslavian authorities declined an UNMIK request to allow international doctors to visit and evaluate sick Albanian prisoners in detention centres in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, but they did pledge to have their own doctors conduct thorough examinations. On 17 December, UNMIK, in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration, conducted a second family visit to the Nis prison involving relatives of 20 prisoners.

On security matters, since the Council was last briefed by the Secretariat, there has been one serious security incident in northern Kosovo. On 18 December, the UNMIK municipal building in Zubin Potok was the scene of a shooting and grenade attack. Threats and attacks against members of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) have continued. The principal coordination mechanism to ensure an effective and coordinated international community response to these incidents is the UNMIK Political Violence Task Force. A number of senior LDK politicians remain under UNMIK Police protection.

With respect to minority communities in Kosovo, Kosovo Serbs and their property have continued to be the targets of violent incidents, including arson and grenade attacks. In Ashkalija communities, the atmosphere has remained tense following the November killing of four Ashkalija returnees in Srbica, in the Mitrovica region. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports that, in several locations, Ashkalija parents have kept their children home from school out of fear for their safety. Interethnic tensions thus continue to create problems for minority community access to social services. For example, access to health care, particularly in the smaller minority communities, is in danger of deteriorating further. These services have largely been provided by non-governmental organizations and KFOR. However, a number of non-governmental organizations either have or are planning to pull out of Kosovo. The Department of Health

established by UNMIK is endeavouring to fill the gaps that will be caused by these departures.

The recent unrest in Kosovo's northern municipalities has resulted in increased pressure on Kosovo Albanians and other minorities in these areas. In this respect, a sharp increase was noted in the number of incidents targeting Kosovo Albanians and other minorities who remain in the northern side of the town of Mitrovica. UNHCR estimates that as few as 19 Kosovar Albanian families remain within the general population in that part of town. UNHCR notes that minorities are still leaving the province, though recent departures tend to be small in scale.

On 13 January, the Joint Committee on the Return of Kosovo Serbs endorsed a framework document on returns in 2001. The framework document notes that return operations should be low-profile, incremental and orderly. It contains a detailed analysis of living conditions in Kosovo Serb communities throughout the province and specific recommendations as to measures required and resources needed at the local and central levels in order to create the conditions favourable for returns. Both the Serb National Councils of Gracanica and Mitrovica have strongly endorsed the framework document.

(*spoke in English*)

I would now like to turn to civil administration and the rule of law. Since the Council was last briefed, there have been key developments in civil administration. Employment offices are now operational in a growing number of communities. An initiative to place a youth worker in every municipality has been launched in order to involve the young in community activities, such as refuse clean-up and safe driving campaigns. By the end of 2000, more than 100 schools had been constructed or repaired. All tent schools have been replaced by containers. Facilities and staff have been provided to care for abandoned children and adoption procedures are now in place to find permanent homes for them. As of the end of December, 46,000 families were receiving social assistance. UNMIK's second winterization programme is under way, assisted by unseasonably mild weather. Firewood and coal have been distributed to needy families and emergency shelters have been constructed in key cities.

The Mission has made significant progress in strengthening the rule of law in Kosovo. The Kosovo Judicial Institute and the World Bank began work on a $3-million technical assistance project to establish various aspects of commercial law, including training for judges and lawyers. The Judicial Performance Working Group has launched its review of the judiciary, with specific attention to possible misconduct of judges, lay judges and prosecutors.

The Kosovo Police Service (KPS) has improved in both quantity and quality. 312 cadets graduated from the eleventh class at the Kosovo Police Service School on 16 December, bringing the total number of trainee police officers who graduated from the school's basic training course to 2,851. Despite increased threats and intimidation against Kosovo Police Service personnel, KPS officers are largely performing in a professional manner. This was exemplified by the pursuit and arrest by an off-duty KPS officer of a homicide suspect who had escaped multiple times after being arrested for shooting a Russian KFOR soldier.

With respect to economic reconstruction, UNMIK's initial focus on emergency reconstruction has now shifted to economic development and the promotion of private sector enterprise. Attention has focused on the development of small to medium-size enterprises, which should generate the bulk of sustainable job growth. Substantial progress has been made towards establishing a legal framework to support private sector development. Four core regulations — dealing with business organizations, pledges, foreign investment and contracts — have been endorsed by the IAC. In mid-December, the Mission published a preliminary assessment of the continuing reconstruction and economic development needs of Kosovo. In addition to private sector development, the assessment outlined five other priorities, including education, health, poverty alleviation, public administration and housing.

Under the Kosovo consolidated budget for 2001, domestic sources of revenue will play an increasingly major role in funding expenditures. The 2001 budget provides for total recurrent and some capital expenditures of 743 million deutsche marks in public enterprises, the municipalities and the general government. This is financed from domestic revenues — such as taxes, fees and user charges — of 541 million deutsche marks and donor grants of 202 million deutsche marks, of which 40 million deutsche marks is exclusively for electricity imports, if required.

With respect to the situation in southern Serbia, the security environment in the Presevo Valley remains tense, although the risks of major conflict appear to have diminished. Most of the 5,000 ethnic Albanians who fled in November 2000 have since returned to their homes in southern Serbia. However, the situation is not yet stable. Elements from the Liberation Army of Presevo, Medveda and Bujanovac (UCPMB) have moved into towns and villages, reportedly to protect the returning populations, and are now in close proximity to Serbian police and Yugoslav military forces. In addition, several incidents in southern Serbia have threatened the ceasefire understanding reached in early December. They include the abduction on 31 December of six ethnic Serbs near a crossing point into Kosovo, all of whom were released the next day after intervention by KFOR.

KFOR has continued to play a major role in helping to stabilize the situation, including a visit by the Commander of KFOR to Bujanovac on 20 December. Following this visit, KFOR brokered an agreement on 30 December designed to improve freedom of movement between Bujanovac in Serbia proper and the town of Gnjilane in Kosovo. On 10 January, the UNHCR Special Envoy visited villages in the ground safety zone and held meetings with the ethnic Albanian Mayor of Presevo and Mr. Covic, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia, in order to assess the situation of the returnees. Mr. Covic emphasized his desire to work with KFOR to arrange for the peaceful disarmament of ethnic Albanian fighters in the area, gave security guarantees for all those who wished to return to their homes in Presevo, and told UNHCR that there would be compensation for any damages to property by the security forces.

Mr. Covic also stated that arrangements would be made to enhance the role of ethnic Albanians in local government. According to UNHCR, further concrete measures, such as the inclusion of ethnic Albanians in the local police forces and the demilitarization of the area, are needed in order to address the sources of tension in the area. UNHCR has established a presence in the area in order to closely monitor the situation.

The issue of depleted uranium has been very much in the news, and I shall take the opportunity of this briefing to say a few words on that particular issue. In November 2000, UNMIK invited a team of scientists, led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and including the International Atomic Energy Agency, to study the possible presence of radioactivity in and around sites where depleted uranium ammunition was used. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), through KFOR, provided maps identifying 112 such sites, most of them in southern and western Kosovo. The UNEP-led team visited 11 sites: five in the west and six in the south of the province. The team collected 340 samples of soil, water and vegetation, and conducted smear tests on buildings, destroyed army vehicles and depleted uranium penetrators. The samples are now being analysed in Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Austria and Italy.

The team's preliminary field findings show three sites with no signs of higher radioactivity, nor any remnants of depleted uranium ammunition. At eight sites, the team found slightly higher amounts of radiation immediately at or around the holes left by depleted uranium ammunition, or pieces and remnants of ammunition. The team's final report is expected in March 2001, although a further follow-up mission may be needed.

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the UNMIK Department of Health and Social Welfare have examined the incidence of leukaemia in Kosovo. Records at Pristina Hospital for the past four years were reviewed, and doctors from district hospitals have been interviewed. The initial survey indicates that the incidence of leukaemia in adults in Kosovo has not increased.

UNMIK is taking a number of specific steps to deal with the potential problems posed by depleted uranium. Warning signs are being posted by UNMIK in all known areas that were targeted by shells containing depleted uranium. At UNMIK's request, the World Health Organization has seconded a staff member to Pristina to coordinate the establishment of a voluntary testing programme for Kosovo residents and UNMIK staff at Pristina Hospital. The WHO is also dispatching to Kosovo three specialists — a toxicologist, an authority on radiation and an environment expert — to assess the consequences of depleted uranium. A committee of local medical experts is being established, with a representative from the UNMIK Department of Health among its members. Members of the committee will be included in briefing sessions dealing with the public health aspects of depleted uranium.

A public information campaign is being developed to inform Kosovo residents, both local and international, about depleted uranium and what is known about illnesses, specifically leukaemia, which may or may not be related to ingesting depleted uranium.

To conclude, I should like to stress that over the last 18 months, UNMIK has made impressive progress in the implementation of its mandate. The support of the members of the Council and the inspired leadership of Mr. Kouchner have played an essential role in this process. As the leadership of the Mission passes from one Special Representative of the Secretary-General to another, preparations are already under way to tackle the new set of challenges UNMIK will face in the coming months. The new Special Representative of the Secretary-General has laid out a clear agenda for the future. Under his leadership, the Mission will concentrate on developing a legal framework for provisional self-government in Kosovo, in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999).

Renewed energy will also be put into the development of effective law-enforcement institutions. In addition, UNMIK will establish an office in Belgrade in order to facilitate dialogue with the Government of Yugoslavia. In order to realize these ambitious goals, the Mission will continue to rely upon the type of strong and committed support it has enjoyed from the Council and Member States since its inception.

The President: I thank Mr. Guéhenno for his comprehensive briefing.

Mr. Holbrooke (United States of America): Let me express my great appreciation and pleasure at speaking on my next to last day in this job before you, Mr. Foreign Minister, my old friend, from a country I have been associated with for most of my professional career. It is our honour to be here under your presidency today, and tomorrow as well, I hear, which will be an even greater honour. It is a great pleasure to see you again here in New York.

I want to thank the Under-Secretary-General for an excellent and comprehensive briefing, one that responds to all of the issues in front of us. I praise him and his colleagues, and I share in his strong appreciation of the outstanding work of the former Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Bernard Kouchner.

Since this is my penultimate appearance before the Security Council, I should like to make a general remark first about the situation and also about the troop-contributing nations. I am delighted to see that so many of them are represented here today. I want to echo what my colleague, Ambassador Cunningham — who will take over the Mission this weekend and remain as the strong chargé d'affaires, fully and personally backed by the Secretary of State-designate, General Powell, who has personally asked him to remain — said to the Council Tuesday about troop-contributing countries. I strongly support what he said concerning the role of the troop-contributing countries in these deliberations, pending the full-scale reform of the Security Council, which I called for in April, when I changed the American position on Security Council membership. We believe that countries of concern should be here in this room and should have their views heard.

My principle is very simple: transparency and openness in deliberations and all points of view heard, but changes in the actual rules of the Security Council should be part of a comprehensive process. I regret that that has not moved forward further since our announcement in April. But we have left it on the table, and Secretary-designate Powell addressed it yesterday in very open terms at his hearing. I urge the Council to look at what he said on Security Council reform.

Again, I want to stress to the troop-contributing countries present here — and I am glad that Ambassador Schori is at the table with us to represent the European Union — that I strongly support their active participation in our deliberations.

Let me turn now to the Balkans, and particularly to the remarks we have just heard. Of course, the last year has marked a profound change in the situation, almost entirely for the better. Rather than managing constant crises, we now face the more reasonable task of constructing a peaceful and stable future. Still, I want to emphasize that the problems in front of us are extraordinarily difficult. We need to overcome the legacy of corruption, cronyism, economic mismanagement and just plain, downright criminal activities that are so common to countries in post-communist transition and that are particularly endemic in this war-torn region.

The people of Montenegro and Serbia have tough political challenges ahead. They must clean out the

remnants of the old regime, and they must work with the brave leaders of Montenegro to reconcile conflicting approaches to Yugoslavia's constitutional future. President Gjukanovic deserves our appreciation for his steadfastness in the face of Milosević's efforts to crush democracy in Montenegro. How the dispute between Montenegro and Serbia will be resolved is a matter for the two Republics within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to resolve for themselves in a peaceful fashion. I cannot predict how that dispute will be resolved, although I have talked at length to both President Koštunica and President Gjukanovic about that. But I want to stress that the terrain on which that argument is being handled is totally different, and that an entirely peaceful and mutually satisfactory resolution should be achievable, given the leadership in both Republics.

In Bosnia there is much left to do, but progress has been steady and Dayton has been a success. The nation is at peace with itself and with its neighbours. Since we met last, Yugoslavia has recognized Bosnia. Anyone here who has been involved in this issue for a long time — and I think that, in this Chamber, I am probably the person involved in this issue the longest — can say that it was the very issue of recognition that was an animating force in the war itself. All this has been done without injury from hostile action to a single solider of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). That is directly contrary to the dire predictions made by so many people in the early 1990s.

We salute the more than 1,000 brave United Nations peacekeepers who died or were wounded in Bosnia. We note — and I want to stress this — that of the over 1,000 casualties among United Nations peacekeepers the largest single number of casualties was sustained by our great allies the French. But there were no NATO casualties. The difference is inherent in the difference between the United Nations presence in Bosnia and the NATO-driven presence as a result of Dayton. This has given the United Nations and the international community a chance to build a single nation.

While we are far from finished in Bosnia, we have made huge progress. Refugee returns to minority areas have increased significantly, and they are increasing across the board. I especially congratulate the European Union on its significant economic efforts. We can now move farther and faster, in the light of the changes in Zagreb and Belgrade and those occurring in Sarajevo.

Extreme nationalists too often blocked the implementation of Dayton, and they drew support form their neighbouring capitals. That era is over, and the future of Bosnia therefore looks much brighter.

The elections that took place in Bosnia underline several points. In the short term, the strengthening of some of the nationalist parties was not good news, and we must be honest about that. The nationalist parties took advantage of democracy to strengthen their positions, but they are the enemies of democracy. As the people of Bosnia continue to assemble their governments at every level, I have a simple message to my friends in that country: the extreme nationalist parties have no future; they are backward-looking and corrupt, they victimize the very people who support them, and they keep them isolated and weakened economically. They have no place in the future of Bosnia or in the future of Europe.

But there was also good news in those elections. For the first time in Bosnia's post-war history there is a real chance that moderate politicians will be able to assemble a functioning legislative majority at the national level, as well as a fully functioning Government. If that works, it will open up dramatic opportunities for progress and send a powerful message to the world.

I call on the High Representative in Bosnia to watch the new Governments carefully and to act aggressively against those who violate the spirit and letter of the Dayton Agreements. I continue to believe, and I will say it one last time as an official of the United States Government, that the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) — the party of Radovan Karadzic and his fellow war criminals — should have been banned a long time ago. It has no place in Bosnia's future. They are the Nazis of the Balkans. I am hopeful that when the dust from that election settles, the extreme nationalists will be further marginalized. I take note of the voluntary detention of Madam Plavsic, who is now in The Hague. What she did was courageous and correct. I am sure that it will be taken into account as the legal proceedings against her proceed, and I believe that it should send a powerful signal to other people in the region that they can run but they cannot hide.

The situation in Kosovo, which is what we are here to discuss today, also remains extremely difficult.

I warmly welcome the successor to Mr. Kouchner, Hans Haekkerup, to his new task. I had excellent talks with him during his trip to New York. I urge him publicly, as I did privately, not only to continue the excellent work of his predecessor in accordance with what the Under-Secretary-General has reported to us today, but also to focus on two overriding issues of transcendent historic importance. Anyone here who has been in Pristina knows that just working in that atmosphere on a day-to-day basis is so difficult that one can lose track of the larger issues. But I have no question that Minister Haekkerup, with his vast experience as a former Minister of Defence, will be able to succeed there. I believe that while he continues his day-to-day efforts Mr. Haekkerup's primary focus should be to hold Kosovo-wide elections as soon as possible so that the people of Kosovo can govern themselves democratically.

That is what is called for in resolution 1244 (1999). While there is a legitimate disagreement in the Chamber about certain aspects of that resolution — and I know I will hear in a moment from some of my friends about views of theirs that differ from the ones I have stated — there should be no disagreement on the next major step, because resolution 1244 (1999) definitely calls for self-governing status internally. I recognize the ambiguity on final status, and I will address that in a minute. But I say to my friends in the Chamber, and particularly to my friends from the Russian Federation and China — with whom we have had previous disagreements on this matter — that there should be no disagreement about the Kosovo-wide elections. If there is, I would hope that it will be aired publicly and prominently so that we can address it. But my view is that that is unambiguous. In fact, as most present will recall, it was my view that the election held last September should have included the Kosovo-wide level as well as the municipal level. That was not the decision made by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). So be it. The election took place. It was successful. It was peaceful. Then the Serbian elections took place. They were successful. They were peaceful. Contrary to the fears of many people, including my own concerns, they took place inside Kosovo as well without problems. So I think the situation is now open for this all-important election. My own hope is that it will be held as early as this spring. That may be overly optimistic, but I urge the Security Council, and I urge the Under-Secretary-General, and I urge Mr. Haekkerup and the OSCE to start planning it now. It takes 120 to 180 days from the time one commits oneself, and the longer we talk, the longer we wait; and this needs to be done. After it is done, this Council and the world community will face an even greater challenge.

On the next point — the future and final status of Kosovo — I can only offer some speculative opinions, because one cannot really deal with this issue — the final status — until the elections have been held. But I believe the elections will be a success and will produce a reasonable group of elected officials who will represent the aspirations of the people of Kosovo. I hope that this election will include the Serbs and other ethnic groups besides the Albanians in Kosovo so that it can be fully representative.

After that election, however, we will need to recognize the underlying fact. Kosovo will never be peaceful and stable until its status is resolved. The continuing violence of the region, most of which is currently coming from extremists on the Albanian side, is unacceptable. But until we resolve the status issue in a mutually satisfactory way, the anxieties the problem causes will continue to fester and lead to more problems. Anyone who doubts the danger of this issue needs to look only a little bit further to the East, to the Middle East, to the area seething now, to the occupied territories, to recognize how dangerous this issue will be if it is left to fester.

If we are having this discussion 10 years from today, if NATO troops are still in Kosovo 10 years from today, we will have failed. Ten years may seem inconceivable, but the United Nations Command is still in existence in Korea 48 years after the end of the Korean War precisely because the status of Korea was never resolved, and so the United Nations Command has had to remain, and the American troops remain in Korea 48 years later. I hope that the Council will not have to be discussing Kosovo 10 years or 5 years from today, but it will unless the status is resolved.

Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) states clearly that all options remain on the table and sets forth a process without dictating a solution. It is the task to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo to facilitate the political process that will resolve this issue. Again I stress that the intensive work must follow the elections, but we must be aware of this issue now. It may take some time. It may take a long time for the process on final status to

reach a solution. But I believe that the process should begin as soon as the two sides are ready. Nothing would do more to reduce the uncertainty and anxiety that drive the violence in Kosovo than the start of a fair process aimed at resolving the status of Kosovo.

I think we should be clear about two points before this process begins. First, the terms of any eventual settlement must be mutually acceptable to both sides and backed by the international community. No other approach will result in a stable, long-term solution. No other approach will permit a significant drawdown in external forces.

Secondly, the need to start this dialogue only increases the importance of holding the elections I spoke of earlier, the Kosovo-wide elections, as soon as possible. The people of Kosovo need democratically chosen leaders to speak for them in this discussion that will take place.

We cannot allow the challenges that remain to detract from our sense of what was already been accomplished, however. The Balkans are a very different place, and a much better place, than they were eight years ago. Violent clashes seemed to lurk around every corner until recently. But today the chances of a major conflict are increasingly remote, especially thanks to the democratic Government of President Koštunica and the newly elected leadership of Serbia under Prime Minister Zizić. I also want to congratulate Prime Minister Zizić, who I have known for many years as an opposition leader, for having finally taken his rightful place as an elected, democratically chosen leader.

Still, my friends, there is much yet to do. My greatest regret is that the main perpetrators of the region's crimes are not yet in The Hague where they belong. But the net is closing in. As I said earlier, Ms. Plavcic's voluntary surrender last week was an important step forward, and I say here publicly that I am sure that she will be able to offer important evidence of crimes that others committed, and the others should think hard about what that means for them.

I am confident that the next Administration will have no more tolerance for the forces of ethnic separatism and hatred than we have. Secretary of State-designate Colin Powell spoke movingly yesterday of America's role as a beacon of freedom in the world. I draw the Council's attention to his comments, which were very gratifying — his powerful statement of support for the Atlantic partnership and for the United Nations and his appreciation for the commitments we made in the Balkans to our allies and the people of the region, for America's freedom is inextricably tied to the freedom and prosperity of Europe. We stand strongest when we stand together with the United Nations and with our closest allies.

On a personal note, this closes out my official responsibilities in regard to this issue, but I can assure the Council that I will remain deeply involved as a private citizen, as I did in previous incarnations as a private citizen both in the 1992-1993 period and again in the 1996-1999 period. So, you may not see me in this Chamber again talking about this issue, but you will probably hear from me. Perhaps what I say will not be universally welcomed, but my commitment to this issue remains undiminished, and I look forward to watching all of you as you proceed. The long journey is not over, but we have made tremendous progress. At long last, I think the dream of a Europe united, whole and free seems to be within sight.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States for his kind words addressed to me and to my country.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): I thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his elaborate briefing on the situation in Kosovo.

Last week Mr. Kouchner handed over his charge as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. That concluded his 18-month-long responsibility in one of the most difficult areas where the United Nations is involved in peacekeeping, with the added responsibility of governance. In this year and a half, Mr. Kouchner was able to reach out to the victims of a damaged and divided society with courage, compassion and urgency. That was critical in addressing the priorities of a population devastated by war.

We heartily welcome Mr. Hans Haekkerup as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Kosovo and as the head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). His predecessor has left behind a firm foundation on which to build. Still, the task ahead is huge and by no means an easy one. We are convinced that with his experience, wisdom and dedication, the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General will give the United Nations Mission in Kosovo new dynamism.

I will mention some of the immediate priorities that the new Special Representative will need to focus on. The first is curbing violence. That will be one of the main issues on his agenda. Violence and killing must stop, irrespective of the ethnicity of the population. It is true that the ethnic hatred is now scaled down substantially, compared to a year before. But it is still smouldering. Wounds are raw, and untoward incidents could easily flare up and quickly get out of control. Careful attention should be given to ensure arrangements that will make all people feel safe. With the number of police now approaching the target level, and with much better functional administration, there is now a brighter prospect that an end can be brought to violence.

Second is the matter of elections. One of the remarkable achievements in Kosovo was the holding of municipal elections last October. The process demonstrated the desire to exercise democratic rights and move towards self-governance. The outcome also points to how the majority of the people view their future. It was reassuring for the world to see that the Kosovars inclined towards the moderate leadership and their aspiration to live in peace. The logical next step would be to hold Kosovo-wide general elections. Participation by all the population of Kosovo, all ethnic groups, is important.

Third is the judiciary. A greater level of judicial activity has been seen, particularly recently, with the increase in the number of persons and material resources. The addition of about a dozen international judges, seized mainly with war crimes and ethnically related crimes, has contributed to significant improvement in the area. An effective judiciary is, needless to say, important for establishment of the rule of law.

Fourth is the issue of refugee return. The return of nearly a million refugees from June 1999 to date, both spontaneously and through organized efforts, is a great success. Although the rate of return was expected to fall in winter, it is conceivable that the flow will go up with the approach of spring. It is necessary at this point to enhance the facilities necessary to handle large-scale returns. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has a special role to play.

The fifth priority is missing persons and detainees. The uncertainty regarding the fate of the missing persons remains a matter of great anxiety and torment for various ethnic communities in Kosovo. This continues to be a major source of tension in inter-ethnic relations and an obstacle to the return to normalcy.

We welcomed the decision to appoint Ambassador Henrik Amneus as Special Envoy, as his mandate covers all persons deprived of liberty, including prisoners, detainees and missing persons in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We expect a comprehensive solution to the missing and the detained, rather than intervention in individual cases, which would take a long time. The prospect has significantly brightened with the establishment of democratic government in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It is unfortunate that we have yet to see any breakthrough in this regard, in this politically sensitive and at the same time humanitarian issue. We would urge the Kostunica Government to take urgent initiatives in this regard. We would like to hear a report on the outcome of the mandate of Ambassador Amneus.

Sixthly, there is the matter of development and reconstruction. The effort to construct a vibrant, market-oriented economy in Kosovo with a view to building institutions for eventual integration with the rest of Europe should continue. It must take into account the essential inputs for a well-functioning economy, including housing, utilities and employment. While there is an ongoing effort to address the immediate needs, investment must at the same time be made to lay the foundations for a long-term solution.

Before concluding, I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for briefing the Council on the situation arising from reported depleted uranium contamination in Kosovo. It will be our responsibility to keep the matter under close watch.

Kosovo has come a long way in a relatively short span of time, from a war-ravaged inter-ethnic hotbed to a society with cautious optimism for a peaceful future. The task of building a self-governing society from the ruins of war is enormous. It is particularly so when the hangover from the past contributes little to the transition into a modern society. We should give the Kosovars at least some time before inferring that progress is not fast enough. During all that time, they need our constant support and encouragement. We wish the new Special Representative all success in his

onerous undertaking of leading the United Nations Mission to a successful conclusion.

Mr. Gatilov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are also grateful to Mr. Guéhenno for the informative briefing he has given us about the situation in Kosovo and the activities of the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK).

Our debate today is taking place at a time when the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General is taking up his duties — the new leader of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, Mr. Haekkerup. He has inherited a difficult situation. As we have often said, his predecessor, in our opinion, allowed several distortions in implementing Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and, virtually circumventing the Council, took a number of serious measures which would have led to separating Kosovo from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

But now a new stage is beginning, and we expect that with the appointment of the new Special Representative this flawed practice will be totally ended. We are convinced that in his work the Special Representative, whatever margin he may have for independent action, will — and must — strictly respect the principle of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic, enshrined in resolution 1244 (1999).

Today there is a qualitatively new situation in the region, and full use must be made of this. The new democratic leadership of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has declared that it is interested in establishing close contacts and cooperation with the Special Representative. Use must be made of this intent so that decisions on matters of great importance will be taken in agreement with the authorities of Yugoslavia.

Russia welcomes the establishment of such cooperation. To that end, thought might be given to establishing some special mechanism, something along the lines of a joint implementation commission, for implementing the military-technical agreements. Also important is the question of the status of the two international presences. As we have often said, this question must be settled by the signing of appropriate agreements with the Federal Republic.

It is also important to help establish a dialogue between Belgrade and the representatives of the Kosovo Albanians. The moderates who supported Rugova in the municipal elections must now show in actions that their constructive position is to help get negotiations with Belgrade started.

We also believe that the timing of the Kosovo-wide elections and the parameters for substantial regional autonomy are matters that must be decided on in close cooperation with Belgrade. The elections must not be an end in themselves. The holding and timing of elections must be determined by the extent to which they will help to achieve a comprehensive settlement in Kosovo. Rushing the elections before an appropriate level of security has been established and a solution to the return of refugees and displaced persons has been found, and before the creation of a multinational society has been identified in Kosovo, would simply strengthen the mono-ethnic nature of the area. That would only complicate the prospects for achieving a political settlement within the context of resolution 1244 (1999).

In this connection, we would draw attention to reports we have received that, at a university in Bern, on the recommendation of the Swiss Government, work is supposedly under way to prepare a draft provisional constitution for Kosovo. We should like to ask whether the United Nations Secretariat has any information on this? It is also rather important to determine whether the Yugoslav authorities have been involved in or asked to consent to the drafting of this document.

The disarmament of former fighters of the Kosovo Liberation Army must be completed. Much remains to be done. In this respect, we draw attention to the most recent monthly report on the activities of the forces in Kosovo, in which there was a reference to suspicions that weapons found last November in caves near Dac Mala had been brought across the border and stored with a view to future use or sale. One might conclude from this that all has not yet been done to end the movement of weapons into Kosovo.

Turning to the situation in Presevo, we support the approach taken by Belgrade to resolve the matter through political dialogue with local Albanians. We consider Belgrade's proposal to begin work on an assessment of the Kumanovo Military-Technical Agreement on the territorial scope and regime governing the ground safety zone to be fully justified.

We cannot fail to refer to another problem that has concerned the world in general in recent days. I refer to the so-called "Balkan syndrome", caused by

the consequences of the use of depleted uranium ordinance in Kosovo, and its impact on the health of the local population and international personnel on the ground. We consider it essential that thorough and objective international expertise be made available to establish the truth of the situation. We await the results of research by the United Nations Environment Programme and expect the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to provide its full cooperation to that work. This is not a minor issue for the Security Council, but a problem that falls fully within its competence. The Security Council established the international presence in Kosovo and accordingly bears responsibility for the security and health of international personnel there.

In conclusion, we draw the attention of Council members to the fact that, despite our frequent requests, the Security Council has yet to receive the report of the Finnish pathologists on the results of the tragic incident in Racak. We are aware that the report is available to the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, but our frequent requests to the United Nations Secretariat have had no response to date. We hope that this matter can finally be brought to its logical conclusion and that the principle of transparency of which we have often heard speak in this Chamber, will ensure that the necessary information be made to the Security Council.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): My delegation wishes to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing on the developments in Kosovo since the Council was last briefed on 19 December. Many of the concerns which were expressed in that briefing by my delegation still remain, particularly in relation to the security situation, the situation of minority communities, detained and missing persons and the humanitarian situation. We are still deeply concerned about the situation in the Presevo Valley and the potential for destabilization. That situation must not be allowed to worsen further.

Since we were briefed in December, Mr. Hans Haekkerup has taken over as head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in succession to the dynamic leadership of Mr. Bernard Kouchner, to whom my delegation wishes all the best in his future endeavours. We extend a warm welcome to the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General as he seeks to address the remaining challenges in Kosovo. We have noted that his first priority is to speed up the preparatory process that will lead to Kosovo-wide elections. We agree that the legal framework for an elected assembly and provisional Government has to be settled before such elections are held.

We are still convinced that the provisions in resolution 1244 (1999) must serve as the basis for the work of UNMIK and must be fully implemented. The work of UNMIK is significant and my delegation wishes once again to express our unequivocal support for that work as the Mission's men and women seek to prepare Kosovo for substantial autonomy, in collaboration with the people of Kosovo. We encourage UNMIK to continue its work in reconfiguring the existing administrative structures as part of its efforts to build local capacity for self-governance.

We believe that the process of defining autonomy and of developing institutions of self-government, with the people of Kosovo sharing more and more responsibility in the administration of the province, must be actively pursued. The early meeting between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the members of the Interim Administrative Council underlines his commitment to fulfilling the terms of resolution 1244 (1999).

The Jamaican delegation fully supports the other priorities set out by the Special Representative, namely, making law enforcement as effective as possible in order to create a secure environment for the return of Kosovo Serbs, and fighting organized crime. While there have been notable improvements over the last year and a half, my delegation remains concerned about the security situation and the situation of minorities. We have always maintained that, until these are effectively addressed, it will be difficult to promote reconciliation. These groups continue to feel at risk and this does not augur well for continued forward movement. We have noted the terms of the framework document to which Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno referred, established for the return of Kosovo Serbs, and we hope that this document can be put into practice speedily.

It is only when these concerns are addressed that the people of Kosovo will be able to focus on their pressing social and economic needs. We welcome the focus on economic development, particularly the development of small and medium enterprises. We agree that a legal framework is critical for the

promotion of private-sector development, and we welcome the four key regulations which were endorsed by the Interim Administrative Council (IAC).

The priorities outlined by Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno, in addition to private-sector development, are essential when looking at Kosovo's development in a broader sense. Built into the areas of health, education, poverty alleviation and housing, however, must be the focus on capacity-building, which will prepare the people of Kosovo for autonomy and ensure sustainability of the projects which have begun.

Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno has informed us that the situation in southern Serbia, in the Presevo Valley, remains unstable, and that recent incidents threaten the ceasefire. If the sources of tension are to be removed, it is important that a spirit of reconciliation be generated among the communities. The flow of illegal weapons must be stopped.

My delegation reiterates that it is imperative that there should be increased surveillance by the Kosovo Force (KFOR) to put an end to extremist activities and to stop the traffic in illegal weapons. We continue to be encouraged by the commitment of the Yugoslav authorities to work with UNMIK, and we believe that this can only be helped by UNMIK's decision to establish a liaison office in Belgrade.

The issue of trafficking in human persons is one which my delegation has addressed on several occasions over the past year. We were therefore pleased to learn that UNMIK has now approved a regulation making trafficking in persons a crime punishable by two to 20 years in prison. This is an important development, as it indicates the seriousness of the crime, which affects mainly women and which has to be addressed in concert with the neighbouring countries.

The regulations prohibiting trials *in absentia* for serious violations of law and creating the legal guarantees necessary to make Kosovo more attractive to foreign investment are other important additions to the corpus of law for Kosovo.

Let me join in thanking Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for having briefed the Council on the voluntary testing programme being instituted by UNMIK in regard to the possible hazards from depleted uranium. This is important to allay fears, particularly among the civilian population of Kosovo, and we agree with Ambassador Chowdhury that the Council should be kept informed of any developments.

In conclusion, my delegation recognizes that many challenges remain for Kosovo and for the international community in the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). We will continue to fully support the efforts of UNMIK and the people of Kosovo as they seek to chart their future destiny.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): Mr. Foreign Minister, it is good to see you here again guiding our deliberations, and we look forward to your able stewardship again tomorrow. I should like also at this point to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for a very exhaustive and useful briefing.

Ambassador Schori of Sweden will speak on behalf of the European Union later in this debate, and, since my delegation fully supports what he will say, I should like to raise only a few points during this intervention.

The first point that I think we should bear in mind on this occasion is the tribute we owe to Mr. Kouchner, who left Kosovo last weekend after a stint of 18 months. His commitment has been remarkable. He has achieved a major transformation, and I would not like to let this occasion pass without reiterating the United Kingdom's thanks to him for his hard work. As he takes up the reins, Mr. Haekkerup will have the support of a now very experienced United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) team. The tasks he faces will be as challenging as they have been over the last year and a half.

Despite the honest differences of opinion to which Ambassador Holbrooke referred and of which I picked up tinges in Ambassador Gatilov's statement, it is most important that Mr. Haekkerup should know that he has the full weight of the Council behind him, because his task will continue to be very difficult. I can assure him, and the Council, that he will have the United Kingdom's full support.

The security situation in the Presevo Valley and in southern Serbia continues to be of serious concern. We condemn the ongoing violent action by armed groups. We welcome the action that the Kosovo Force (KFOR) has taken to address the problem, and I think that Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno's briefing testifies to the effectiveness of that action. We also

welcome the restraint shown by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Serbian forces.

A lasting solution to the problems in the Presevo Valley can be achieved only through dialogue between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbian authorities, and representatives of the local Albanian communities. My delegation urges a start to that dialogue as soon as possible in order to bring about the earliest possible resolution of the situation.

At most Council meetings on Kosovo over the last year, my delegation, like many others – and I particularly noted the strong statement this morning by Ambassador Chowdhury – has expressed its concern over the situation of detainees and missing persons. In this connection, we strongly welcome the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Federal Cabinet's approval of a draft amnesty law. We call on the authorities there to release all Kosovar Albanian prisoners held on political grounds as soon as possible. It goes without saying that a swift conclusion to this sensitive issue would be a very important step towards reconciliation between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Kosovo.

We have got a busy morning, and I will leave it there. Ambassador Schori will, as I have said, speak more exhaustively on behalf of the European Union later on in the debate.

Mr. Ben Mustapha (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to thank you, Sir, for having convened this meeting on Kosovo and for your continued interest in the Council's work. I should also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his very informative and useful briefing on the progress made by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). My delegation would like also to welcome the appointment of Mr. Hans Haekkerup, the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Kosovo. We wish him every success in his new duties.

The current situation in the Balkans allows us to consider, with cautious optimism, a constructive political dialogue on the future of Kosovo. The successful elections of 28 October 2000 and the political stability in the region have opened new prospects for the implementation of a regime with substantial autonomy, as called for by Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

We feel that the province's new configuration should take into consideration the right of all of its inhabitants to security, to respect for differences and to participation in public life. It should also outlaw hatred and attitudes based on ethnic considerations, and promote peaceful coexistence among all of the communities.

In this regard, we welcome the fact that Mr. Hans Haekkerup, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, has decided to open an office in Belgrade in order to strengthen dialogue with the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and to prepare for the holding of legislative elections in the province of Kosovo.

One of the new Special Representative's priorities will be to restore security by tackling the root causes of the violence prevailing in the region. It should be pointed out that these violent actions are clearly political in nature and could destabilize the region. Apart from the fact that the violence is continuing to fuel tension among the inhabitants, it also prevents the reconciliation of ethnic communities and undermines the efforts of the international community. Those actions are unacceptable. We welcome the initiative to establish a special unit to fight organized crime throughout Kosovo.

The violence has led to a new flow of displaced persons in Kosovo and has made the situation even more complex. We encourage the Kosovo Force and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo to continue their efforts to rein in the activities of extremists. In that regard, we believe that the international presence in Kosovo is more necessary than ever to maintain a climate of trust among all the parties and to strengthen harmony among its inhabitants. Any withdrawal by the international community should take place only after thoughtful reflection and the formulation of an exit strategy that guarantees a lasting return of peace to the region.

The issue of detainees and disappeared persons is particularly sensitive, and is one of the primary sources of inter-ethnic tension in Kosovo. We welcome the efforts of the Special Envoy on persons deprived of liberty to seek out appropriate responses to this tragedy. We invite all the parties to cooperate fully with him in order to facilitate his task.

Establishing a reliable and impartial judicial system is crucial for restoring peace in Kosovo. The

impartial and non-discriminatory application of the law will reinforce Kosovars' confidence in the rule of law, which is the sole guarantee of peaceful coexistence between all the ethnic communities. My delegation is pleased with the progress made in this area. We encourage the Mission to continue its efforts to bring about a reform of the criminal justice system in Kosovo.

The issue of refugees and displaced persons is crucial in the quest for a lasting solution to the problem of Kosovo. We must therefore work to ensure their return under satisfactory conditions, specifically, by strengthening the security of minority communities. This issue is even more crucial given the fact that returns often take place spontaneously. In that regard, we commend the efforts of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

In conclusion, I wish to pay a well-deserved tribute to Mr. Bernard Kouchner, the former Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Kosovo. I thank him for his tireless efforts and commitment and wish him the greatest success in his new duties.

Mr. Kuchynski (Ukraine): I am very grateful to Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his very comprehensive update on the latest developments in Kosovo and on the activities of United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

The general situation in Kosovo has not undergone substantial change. The positive tendencies towards general stabilization in the province that have been facilitated by the efforts of UNMIK and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) were again challenged by a number of discouraging factors. Despite all of the international efforts made, inter-ethnic violence, lack of security for national minorities, high levels of organized crime and the abundance of illegal small weapons are still among the main features of the situation in Kosovo. Therefore, while acknowledging the work one by UNMIK and KFOR, my delegation thinks that there is still a long way to go to ensure full implementation of resolution 1244 (1999).

Ukraine welcomes the assumption of office on 15 January of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, Mr. Haekkerup. We have taken careful note of Mr. Haekkerup's major priorities for his future activities in that key position, and we would like to express our full support to him. In particular, my delegation is satisfied with the very prudent approach taken by the Special Representative with regard to such a complex and sensitive issue as the Kosovo-wide general elections. We share his view that before such elections are held their legal framework should be developed. It is also important to lay a clear-cut foundation for future relations between the bodies to be established and UNMIK. We hope that the results of work on these issues will be presented to the Council before UNMIK proceeds further towards the holding of elections.

My delegation also endorses the second priority of the Head of UNMIK, that is, to make law enforcement in Kosovo as effective as possible. That will definitely facilitate the return of former Kosovo inhabitants, primarily Kosovo Serbs. At the same time, in our view, the problem of the return of national minorities to the province is not limited solely to the issue of security; it is also linked to securing their free access to social services, education and health care, as well as to settling the issue of property rights.

In the context of law enforcement, we welcome the recent actions by UNMIK police throughout the province to confiscate illegal weapons. We believe that the additional regulation increasing the penalties for possession of illegal weapons will also helpful. The recent issuance by UNMIK of a regulation making human trafficking a punishable crime is a timely step in the right direction.

My delegation also agrees with the third priority set forth by the new leadership of UNMIK: to foster a dialogue with the Belgrade authorities. My country strongly favours the establishment of an UNMIK office in Belgrade, and a proper dialogue and partnership relations between UNMIK and the Yugoslav authorities. In our view, that would enhance the effectiveness of the Mission and contribute to strengthening the democratic changes in Yugoslavia.

In that light, we pay tribute to the constructive role played by KFOR and UNMIK in providing the necessary security conditions for the holding of Serbian parliamentary elections in Kosovo on 23 December.

In that context, it is our hope that one of the first problems to be solved through a closer dialogue between UNMIK and KFOR, on the one hand, and the Yugoslav Government, on the other, will be the restoration of proper security conditions in the ground

safety zone. The security situation in the Presevo Valley, which has been addressed by the Security Council on several occasions, remains of serious concern to us. Regrettably, the past month has witnessed an increase in illegal and provocative activities in the ground safety zone by the ethnic Kosovo Albanian fighters, in clear defiance of all of KFOR's efforts. We think that any delay to take resolute action to disarm and disband those militants is fraught with the worst consequences possible for international peace efforts in Kosovo and far beyond.

We learned with deep concern of the announcement made by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) this month that the pieces of ammunition tips found at sites targeted by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Kosovo during its military operation in 1999 contained depleted uranium. My country welcomes all precautionary measures undertaken by UNMIK and KFOR to protect the civilian population in Kosovo against any possible ill effects from the depleted uranium. As a contributor of troops to KFOR and of police and civilian personnel to UNMIK, and as the country that suffered the largest radiological disaster in the history of mankind, Ukraine stands for a comprehensive and independent investigation into these facts.

Finally, I want to mention one very special event that took place in Kosovo on 9 January. On that day the President of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma, while paying a working visit to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia together with the President of Poland, Aleksander Kwasniewski, visited the location of the joint Polish-Ukrainian peacekeeping battalion deployed by KFOR. It was a very successful visit. Let me finally quote President Kuchma's remarks after his meeting in Belgrade with Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica:

> "Through the working visit to Kosovo and Belgrade, Ukraine has demonstrated its consistent policy of respect for the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. This policy is based on the premise that stability in the Balkans depends on stability in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which, in its turn, is based on the preservation of its territorial integrity. Ukraine believes that the solution to the Kosovo problem should be sought in the framework of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999)."

My delegation will continue to uphold this position in the Security Council in pursuit of a final settlement of the issue of Kosovo.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has come a long way since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). Major developments have taken place both in Kosovo itself and in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

I would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Guehenno, for a comprehensive briefing. It provided exactly the kind of high-quality information that was called for in our debate on cooperation with troop-contributing countries last Tuesday.

Like other major troop contributors and aid donors to the international community's efforts in Kosovo and the Balkans, Norway welcomes this open debate as an opportunity for us — Council members and affected non-members alike — to take stock of the situation at the start of what may be regarded as a new phase in UNMIK's operations.

While thanking the entire UNMIK staff, in particular Bernard Kouchner for his dedication and tireless work as Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Norway warmly welcomes the appointment of Hans Haekkerup of Denmark as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General. He can count on Norway's full support in his endeavours to implement the tasks entrusted to him by the Security Council in resolution 1244 (1999).

Many serious challenges remain with important implications for international peace and security. First of all, the security situation and the level of violence in Kosovo continue to be of deep concern to us. Combating violence and providing protection for all minorities in Kosovo must remain a top priority for UNMIK and KFOR. It is unjustifiable that people continue to be killed and attacked because of their ethnic background. Norway condemns all acts of violence that undermine possibilities for multi-ethnic coexistence. We welcome the attention given by the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General to law enforcement and fighting crime.

The prime operational responsibility rests with KFOR and the UNMIK police, but Kosovo's political leaders have a major responsibility for the development of a society based on tolerance and non-violence.

Newly elected local leaders must be reminded of this. Efforts to improve the overall situation for minorities, including with regard to health and other social services, must be reinforced. An improved situation for minorities is crucial for refugees to be able to return in safety and dignity.

Inter-Albanian violence, often with political connotations, is also a serious threat working against attempts to build a democratic society in Kosovo. The local population must be encouraged to step forward and assist in the identification of suspects.

A second challenge concerns elections. Norway welcomes the priority given by UNMIK to the implementation of the results of the local elections held last autumn. This must include the adjustment of the joint administrative structures to broaden their political and ethnic bases. Such adjustments will make the central institutions stronger, not weaker. These endeavours must be complemented with training and adequate funding for the newly elected bodies. Norwegian assistance to Kosovo, which amounted to $15 million last year and will remain at a high level of $12 million in 2001, will be directed towards institution-building and transfer of know-how in order to support good governance and generate sustainable employment.

Norway believes that even with comprehensive international assistance, it will be some time before we will be able to see the proper functioning of the newly elected municipal structures. We should allow some time for the local institutions to gain experience before moving to elections at the next level in Kosovo. The mandate and the composition of a Kosovo-wide assembly must be determined and a legal framework created before a decision on the date of the election is taken.

These issues must also be viewed within the context of the new political situation in Belgrade and the implications that this has for Kosovo and the region as a whole. As we have heard today, the preparation of a framework for political and administrative structures at the provincial level has started. This is a natural follow-up to the successfully held elections at the municipal level. Yugoslav authorities should be included in an appropriate manner when consultations outside the UNMIK structures are being carried out. Properly handled, the closer involvement of Belgrade in discussions regarding Kosovo can serve as a useful confidence-building measure both between the international community and Belgrade and between Belgrade and the Kosovo leaders.

We note with concern that the situation for the Kosovo Albanian political prisoners held in Serbia is still unclear. We call upon the Yugoslav authorities to find the appropriate legal channels for the speedy release of the Kosovo Albanian prisoners being held on political grounds. At the same time, further efforts must be made to establish the fate of Serbs missing in Kosovo.

Norway is pleased by the contacts established between UNMIK and the authorities in Belgrade following the democratic changes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We encourage and expect Kosovo Albanian leaders to explore the new possibilities for a constructive dialogue with the Yugoslav authorities.

Norway strongly condemns the recent attacks by ethnic Albanian armed groups in the Presevo Valley in southern Serbia. It is unacceptable that such groups violate the ground safety zone in order to launch attacks on targets in the Presevo Valley. The United Nations and KFOR must make every possible effort to prevent activities that can destabilize the situation in the region and adversely affect developments inside Kosovo. We welcome the measures taken by KFOR to improve the control of the boundary. Additional measures might be called for both by KFOR as regards the security zone, and the UNMIK police as regards preventive measures and investigations inside Kosovo. We also expect the Kosovo Albanian leaders to make greater efforts in order to impede these extremist elements. We commend the responsible and restrained approach by Belgrade in dealing with the situation in the Presevo Valley.

Norway, which, together with Denmark, is taking over as the KFOR lead nation from April this year, will also continue to actively support UNMIK, including through efforts to strengthen internal security and institution-building. It is crucial that the civilian and military sides of a peace operation be closely integrated.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): The Permanent Representative of Sweden will shortly be expressing the views of the European Union on the situation in Kosovo. France subscribes to the statement

that he will make. I should like simply to offer a few additional comments.

Last Saturday, after a remarkable stint of 18 months at the head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Mr. Bernard Kouchner passed the baton to Mr. Hans Haekkerup. Those 18 months involved an enormous amount of particularly difficult work — 18 months of rebuilding Kosovo, laying the foundations of a pluralistic democracy, re-establishing security, promoting coexistence among communities and organizing municipal elections under excellent conditions. Thanks to his resolve and courage, Mr. Kouchner was able to implement the basic elements of resolution 1244 (1999) and to restore confidence and dignity to Kosovo society.

I should like to assure his successor, Mr. Haekkerup, that we have full confidence in him and will provide full support to him as he continues to implement resolution 1244 (1999).

Improving security remains the top priority of the international community's action in Kosovo. In this regard, I should like to recall the last statement made by Mr. Kouchner before he left Pristina, in which he said that the spirit of revenge must be eradicated. All the inhabitants of Kosovo have the same right to security, access to public services and respect for their dignity. Each also has the right to have his or her voice heard by peaceful and democratic means in public debate. As was noted in the most recent report of the Secretary-General, extremists are seeking to put obstacles in the path to coexistence among communities and progress in establishing a democratic and pluralistic society This cannot be tolerated.

I should like to say a few words about violence in the Presevo Valley. In its presidential statement of 19 December, the Security Council strongly condemned intolerable actions by terrorist groups in that zone. We must support the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and UNMIK in their resolve to do everything possible to put an end to such actions.

We welcome the cooperation between KFOR and the Belgrade authorities aimed at remedying the situation, and we also welcome the restraint shown by the Yugoslav authorities. We encourage them to continue to take political and economic steps for the Albanian minority in south-east Serbia. France will play its part in the European Union effort to promote economic development in southern Serbia.

I should also like to raise the issue of the general elections. The elections must be organized when, and only when, conditions have been met. It is essential for preparations for the vote to be impeccable and, in particular, that everything be done to ensure that all the communities can participate, which means that minorities must be registered in advance, particularly the Serb community. Moreover, the nature and the functions of the bodies to be elected must be clearly defined in advance. In this regard, the discussions on the content of the substantial autonomy provided for in resolution 1244 (1999) must take place among Kosovars under the authority of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General; I should like to thank Mr. Guéhenno for his comments in this connection. It is also desirable that the views of other parties involved be taken into consideration at the appropriate time. In this regard, we welcome UNMIK's proposal to open an office in Belgrade.

Mr. Toure (Mali) (*spoke in French*): I, too, would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Guéhenno, for the exhaustive update he has given us on the situation in Kosovo and on the activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). During our public meeting on 19 December, I had the opportunity to mention the remarkable way in which the municipal elections of 28 October in Kosovo were organized, and I welcomed the close cooperation with the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which enabled UNMIK to attain notable political, security, administrative and judicial results. In addition to organizing municipal elections, UNMIK's achievements in the field have focused primarily on the gradual integration of the populations and of local administrations, as well as the consolidation of the administrative structures. That is why my delegation supports UNMIK in its efforts to expand the Kosovo Transitional Council, taking into account the political, ethnic and religious diversity of the province.

The integration of minorities into the administrative, legislative and judicial structures is an important step in the creation of a pluri-ethnic State. My delegation welcomes the progress that has been achieved in setting up municipal assemblies, and expresses its support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in appointing minority

community representatives to the assemblies in the areas where they live.

My delegation also supports the efforts being made by UNMIK to reform the central bodies so as to lead to substantial autonomy. We are certain that the drafting of regulations will continue as planned.

From a security point of view, my delegation is concerned about the wave of violence taking place over the last two months in the demilitarized area of southern Serbia, in the Presevo Valley, where clashes have intensified between Serb security forces and extremist groups of Albanian origin. The threats and acts of intimidation and violence against minorities in Kosovo are another cause for concern for my delegation. All of these illegal actions are unacceptable to my delegation, because they could destabilize the entire region and undermine the huge sacrifices made by the international community to build a pluri-ethnic and democratic Kosovo. We welcome the special measures taken by the international security presence, KFOR, to deal with that problem by strengthening border surveillance, confiscating weapons and stopping illegal activities within Kosovo close to the eastern administrative border. We believe that it is high time the people of Kosovo ended the violence characterizing their society and worked to restore the damaged fabric of Kosovo society after years of repression and conflict; its development and international aid depend on this.

My delegation regrets the fact that minorities are the target of threats, acts of intimidation and violence in Kosovo, necessitating the special security measures taken by the Kosovo Force against such illegal activity.

On the economic level, the re-organization of the local economy and the establishment of legal and trade organs that are indispensable for attracting foreign investment are principal concerns of my delegation. We welcome the measures already taken in the provision of banking and housing services, as well as regulations applying to businesses, foreign investment and contracts. My delegation encourages and welcomes the policy to rebuild housing for vulnerable families whose homes were damaged or destroyed in the conflict.

On the humanitarian level, the return of displaced Serbs to the province is a major challenge which the international community, UNMIK and the Belgrade authorities must take up. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees must have adequate means to meet the needs of those who decide to return home, in particular the most vulnerable among them. The fundamental matter of the approximately 3,500 missing persons is a major concern for my delegation. We welcome the efforts that have been made thus far and urge the Belgrade authorities to step up investigations in order to inform the international community on the fate of the missing.

With respect to health, my delegation is concerned by the effects of the use of depleted uranium on civilian populations during the conflict in the Balkans in 1999. In this respect, we welcome the establishment by Mr. Kouchner, the outgoing head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, of a joint Albanian-Serb group entrusted with investigating the medical effects of depleted uranium.

My delegation wholeheartedly supports the full implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) and believes that the constructive commitment of the democratic Government in Belgrade allows us to view the future with optimism.

In conclusion, my delegation must pay a well-deserved tribute to Bernard Kouchner, who left his post on 15 January, for his outstanding achievements and his efforts in favour of democratization and respect for human rights in Kosovo. We wish him the greatest success in the future and assure his successor, Mr. Hans Haekkerup, of our full support.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I wish to thank you, Sir, for convening this important meeting. I also commend the efforts of the Singapore delegation.

I thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his detailed briefing. The Chinese delegation believes that the situation in Kosovo remains very disturbing, as reflected principally in the following four aspects.

First, the ethnic conflict in Kosovo has yet to see a fundamental change. Violence against and killing of members of ethnic minorities still occur from time to time. We note that the former Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kouchner, admitted before he left office that, since its establishment, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has been unable effectively to guarantee the security of minorities, especially the Serbs. We believe that this is one of the principal reasons for the instability of the situation in Kosovo. Together with the

Kosovo Force, UNMIK should take effective measures to curb extremist ethnic forces, encourage all communities to live in harmony and improve the tense situation in Kosovo.

Secondly, the proposed elections for Kosovo are very worrisome. Some people are trying to politicize the elections. Many people on the ground also see the elections as a move towards independence for Kosovo, which would not only be in violation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), but would also have serious negative effects on the situation in the province. The Chinese delegation believes that resolution 1244 (1999) is very clear on the final status of Kosovo. UNMIK should step up its work to encourage the return of Serbs. Without the broad participation of Serbs, Turks and other minorities, the legitimacy of the elections will be in doubt.

Thirdly, with respect to cooperation between UNMIK and the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, we welcome any step by UNMIK to enhance dialogue with the Yugoslav Government. We also welcome the mechanism for establishing dialogue. We hope that the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General will make progress in moving UNMIK to engage in constructive dialogue with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, because the appropriate settlement of the question of Kosovo hinges on the understanding support and cooperation of the Yugoslav Government.

Fourthly, as to the dialogue between Kosovo Albanians and the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, UNMIK should actively encourage and guide the Kosovo Albanians to resume that dialogue and to seek a settlement satisfactory to all on a formula for substantial autonomy. The international community should exert a positive influence in this respect. Only when national harmony is finally restored to Kosovo and the rights and interests of all communities are ensured through legislation can the issue of Kosovo be decisively settled in a fair and reasonable manner.

I should also like to refer to the many recent reports by the international media on the extensive use by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) of ordinance containing depleted uranium in the Balkans, which has harmed the health of innocent civilians and peacekeepers and damaged the environment. We note that all parties concerned, including the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the European Union and NATO, have indicated their intention to investigate the matter. We hope that such investigation will be conducted in a fair and independent manner, that the results will be made known to the public and that the necessary measures will be taken as soon as possible.

I also take this opportunity to welcome the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Haekkerup, to his post. We note that, following his assumption of office, he issued cautious statements on the elections in Kosovo and that he is determined to make the creation of a secure environment for the return of Serbs and the fight against organized crime priorities in his work. This should indeed be a focus for UNMIK and we express our appreciation for it. We sincerely hope that, under Mr. Haekkerup's leadership, UNMIK will learn from the lessons of the past, truly fulfil its responsibilities mandated by the Security Council and comprehensively implement resolution 1244 (1999).

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I offer special thanks to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Guéhenno, for the information he has provided us. It is an important basis for the statement that we are about to make.

We also take this opportunity to congratulate all the members of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) for their achievements over the past 18 months. The appointment of Mr. Hans Haekkerup as Special Representative of the Secretary-General will help to maintain the proper course initiated by Mr. Bernard Kouchner. We trust that we will continue to see the same level of commitment and dedication in the work of UNMIK.

I should like to focus on five main points.

First, we would like to emphasize the important role that is being played by the new Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in finding a peaceful solution to the problems that we are dealing with today. We must continue to provide support to President Kostunica so that we can effectively contribute to the consolidation of strong institutions in that country.

It is only natural, therefore, that we should temporarily put on hold the strengthening of the Belgrade Government and avoid discussing, or taking decisions on, matters that are extremely sensitive for

the parties concerned. For example, it would be premature to decide, on the one hand, the date of general elections in Kosovo, and on the other, the definitive status of this province. It would be meaningless to move forward in these areas without the consent of Belgrade.

Secondly, we would like to say how important it is for UNMIK to continue working to protect all of the ethnic minorities. It is unacceptable that acts of violence are continuing to take place, such as the ones that occurred recently in the Presevo Valley and in Leposavic. The Albanian extremists must feel pressure from the international community to put an end to these attacks. We believe that political violence as a response to democratic changes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia must stop. UNMIK and the Kosovo Force should spare no effort in putting an end to these destabilizing factors, which could have repercussions in the rest of the region.

Thirdly, we feel that it would be appropriate for UNMIK and the Belgrade Government to come up with a joint solution to the problem of displaced persons and refugees. This could be an important step in generating confidence among the parties, in addition to directly benefiting the most vulnerable segments of the population.

Fourthly, let me note my Government's approval of the commitment of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to respect the provisions of the Military-Technical Agreement and of resolution 1244 (1999). Enhancing cooperation between Belgrade, UNMIK and KFOR is imperative in order to make progress towards finding a lasting solution to this question.

Fifthly, it is important that we review the situation in Kosovo in a much broader context. It would not be advisable to continue viewing each conflict in the Balkans as an isolated case, as this could further delay the achievement of a lasting solution fostered by mutual trust between all of the parties concerned.

I should like to conclude by briefly speaking about the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. To a large degree, the legitimacy and prestige of the Security Council and of the United Nations are at stake when it comes to the effectiveness of this Tribunal and its officers. Furthermore, the validity of international criminal law is also at stake. That is why we believe that the Security Council should do everything in its power to ensure that we achieve the objective for which the Tribunal was established.

Mr. Cooney (Ireland): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for calling this open meeting today. Ireland associates itself fully with everything in the statement which will be delivered by Ambassador Schori of Sweden, as representative of the presidency of the European Union. I would like to take the opportunity of this meeting to highlight a number of issues which Ireland, as an incoming member of the Security Council, considers to be of particular significance.

Ireland acknowledges the combined efforts of the international community in relation to Kosovo. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has been working closely with the Kosovo Force (KFOR), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and other organizations to achieve the objectives laid out in Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). Ireland is pleased that it has been able to contribute personnel to these important missions, and we salute all those who have served in Kosovo in the name of peace.

It is perhaps not inappropriate on this occasion to pay tribute to the personal contribution of Ambassador Holbrooke to the efforts of the international community in the western Balkans. Like him, Ireland looks forward to the peoples of this region joining us in what he described earlier today as a united Europe, whole and free.

We have studied with great interest the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, and we have listened with interest to the comprehensive briefing Mr. Guéhenno gave this morning, for which we would like to thank him. We welcome the progress made in Kosovo in the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). With the help of the Mission, an interim administration has been successfully established, municipal elections have been held in a democratic and peaceful manner, and substantial reconstruction is under way. While certain objectives remain to be achieved, such as the UNMIK mine programme, aspects of the emergency

humanitarian assistance programme and implementation of the recommendations of the UNMIK Department of Justice, Ireland is pleased with the general progress made to date.

However, while the overall security situation has improved, we, like our partners in the European Union, are concerned about the ongoing ethnically and politically motivated violence in the Presevo Valley area of southern Serbia, and particularly in the ground safety zone. We strongly condemn the use of violence by armed groups, which endangers the overall security of the region. Ireland supports the efforts of UNMIK and KFOR in addressing the situation, including the recent arrest of presumed terrorists. Like the United Kingdom, we commend the sensible restraint shown by the Serbian and Yugoslav regular forces in the face of this situation, as well as the commitment of the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to respect the provisions of resolution 1244 (1999) and the Military-Technical Agreement. We believe that full implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) must remain the aim of the international community in Kosovo.

Ireland continues to be greatly concerned with the humanitarian situation in the region. It is essential that progress be made towards facilitating the return by Kosovo Serbs and others to their homes and reversing the effects of the wide-scale devastation in the region.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Bernard Kouchner, who has just completed his work as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of UNMIK. We are all grateful for the energy and determination which Mr. Kouchner brought to this extremely difficult job. We welcome Mr. Hans Haekkerup, who has now taken up duty in Kosovo, and offer him our full support.

Chief among Mr. Haekerrup's tasks will be establishing the legal framework for Kosovo-wide elections. While it is indeed desirable to proceed rapidly, we must be careful to ensure that certain objectives are met in advance: the results of the local elections must be fully implemented, and preparations must be completed in the areas of voter registration, education and information. Ireland has no doubt that Mr. Haekkerup will take account of these, and we appreciate the caution and desire for consultation he expressed when he was in New York last December.

I would, at this point, like to join our partners in the European Union and others in this Chamber in welcoming the programme of democratization in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia begun by President Kostunica. We have already declared our support for President Kostunica, following his victory in the elections last September. The outcome of the Serbian elections on 23 December last confirmed the choice of the democratic option. We are now beginning to see positive signs of the radical transformation initiated and maintained by the Democratic Opposition of Serbia. These combined changes have an effect not only on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, but on the stability and prosperity of the region as a whole. We urge the Governments concerned to continue working towards a peaceful settlement based on democratic principles and full respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the equality of all citizens and national communities.

Of course, the resolution of the difficulties in Kosovo entails a lengthy process of reconciliation and rebuilding. It is important, therefore, that appropriate legal channels be found for the speedy release of Kosovar Albanian political prisoners, and that amnesty be put in place for those detainees who did not bear arms during the conflict in Kosovo.

I would like to mention the importance Ireland attaches to full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. It is essential that all parties to the conflict be treated equally and that indicted war criminals be brought to justice in an even-handed and fair manner. Trials under domestic law are important in coming to terms with the past, but they cannot replace trials in an international forum for certain specific offences.

I would like to thank Mr. Guéhenno for the information he gave us this morning in relation to depleted uranium. We share the view that it is important to establish the facts surrounding the use of depleted uranium in munitions in Kosovo, and its possible side-effects. It is essential that this issue be handled in a transparent way and the information emerging from the various surveys under way — including those to be carried out by the World Health Organization and UNMIK — be shared. This matter is of significance to both the local population and the international troops, observers and aid workers who have served and are serving there.

In conclusion, it is our view that an international presence will be necessary in Kosovo for some time.

We appreciate the excellent work being carried out by UNMIK in very difficult circumstances. I take this opportunity to assure the Council that Ireland will remain, politically and in practice, fully supportive of the efforts of the Secretary-General.

Mr. Neewoor (Mauritius): We appreciate the initiative to hold this open meeting to review the implementation of Security Council resolutions concerning the Balkans, and Kosovo in particular. We thank the Secretariat and Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for the important briefing given to us this morning.

A number of very significant changes have taken place in the region during the past year. We have noted, above all, the successful democratization process in Yugoslavia, starting with the presidential election, which has brought about a change in the political set-up in Belgrade. With the election of Mr. Koštunica as the new President, Yugoslavia undoubtedly is moving towards stability and normalcy. The recent successful parliamentary election in the country is further evidence that the people of Yugoslavia are determined to close the tragic recent chapter of their history and chart a new and better future for themselves. We are particularly pleased that Yugoslavia has now resumed its membership in the United Nations. These positive developments will undoubtedly have a salutary impact all over the Balkans.

We also welcome the recent successful holding of municipal elections in Kosovo as an important step towards the establishment of a representative authority that should ultimately take charge of the administrative machinery, in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999).

The United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK) has done a valiant job in difficult circumstances in carrying out the mandate of resolution 1244 (1999). The out-going head of UNMIK, Mr. Bernard Kouchner, must be commended highly for this. We have no doubt that his successor, Mr. Hans Haekkerup, will do equally well in addressing the enormous challenges Kosovo presents to UNMIK, as he mentioned this morning. We assure him of our full support.

With regard to the people of Kosovo, we note with concern that an ethnic divide still persists and that many citizens of the two major communities are unable to return home and resume normal lives out of fear for their security. We know that wounds take time to heal, whether they be physical or emotional. But these are the same people who have in the past lived as good neighbours in multi-ethnic communities. We believe that is still possible, with a spirit of forgiving and forgetting on the part of all the people of Kosovo. There is hardly any nation today that is not multi-ethnic and where diverse communities share a common destiny in peace and harmony. There is no reason why Kosovo cannot do the same, provided it guards against falling into the trap of misguided political ventures.

Presently UNMIK and the Kosovo Force are serving as vital lifelines for the people of Kosovo by providing an essential administrative machinery and by promoting peace and reconciliation. We must not be oblivious of the fact that there has to be a lasting and peaceful solution to the present stalemate and that it is in the interest of all the people of Yugoslavia, including Kosovo, to create the atmosphere for constructive dialogue to take place among them so as to determine the course they wish to take to ensure a better, peaceful and prosperous future for themselves. The international community must do all it can to encourage this process.

Finally, as members who have spoken before me have done, I wish to express concern about the possible presence of depleted uranium in various areas of Kosovo and the hazard that represents to people there. We encourage UNMIK to continue to address that issue very seriously.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Sweden. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Schori (Sweden): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — as well as the associated countries of Cyprus, Malta and Turkey and the European Free Trade Association countries of Iceland and Liechtenstein align themselves with this statement.

First, the European Union would like once again to thank Mr. Bernard Kouchner for the remarkable work he has carried out over the past years in difficult circumstances, and to pledge our full support to Mr. Hans Haekkerup, the new Special Representative. I would also like to thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his rich bilingual report here today.

The European Union welcomes the progress made in Kosovo in the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) and fully supports the continued efforts of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General to establish democratic, self-governing institutions in Kosovo in order to provide substantial autonomy for the people of Kosovo in accordance with that resolution.

The European Union also supports the efforts being made to increase dialogue and cooperation between the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the relevant institutions of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and welcomes the democratic progress achieved in that country and in Serbia, most recently through the victory of the democratic forces in elections held in December. The European Union expects that this progress will enable essential political, economic and social reforms to be carried out within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which could also contribute to reducing tensions in Kosovo and the Presevo area of southern Serbia.

In this respect, the European Union reiterates its call on the Yugoslav and Serb authorities to find the appropriate legal channels for the speedy release of all Kosovo Albanian prisoners held on political grounds. Such a release could also constitute an important step towards the beginning of a dialogue between the representatives of Kosovo and Belgrade.

Action to combat violence and enhance the security situation for everyone in Kosovo should remain a top priority for UNMIK and the Kosovo Force (KFOR). It is deplorable that men, women and children in Kosovo continue to be killed because of their ethnic background and that moderate opinions expressed by politically engaged Kosovars can be dangerous to their safety.

The European Union vigorously condemns the use of violence, extremism and any act that makes coexistence among communities more difficult and that adversely affects regional stability. In this context, the EU encourages further confidence-building measures between the different ethnic communities in Kosovo and fully supports the right of all displaced people from Kosovo to return to their homes in peace, security and dignity.

An important aspect of enhancing the security situation in Kosovo is reducing the overall level of criminality and enforcing respect for the rule of law. To this end, more than 800 civilian police, as well as judges and prosecutors, from European Union member States are serving in Kosovo. The EU also supports the work of the Kosovo Police Service School to train local police and police trainers. Furthermore, EU member States remain the largest troop contributors to KFOR, which continues to play a crucial role in maintaining stability and security in Kosovo.

Another priority for the European Union is to contribute to the reconstruction and economic development of Kosovo. The EU is by far the single largest donor providing assistance to Kosovo and is at the forefront of the reconstruction effort. In this regard, the European Union believes that it is important to continue to create favourable conditions for the economic development of Kosovo through the establishment of viable and efficient economic structures, including in the fiscal area.

The European Union strongly condemns the violent action by ethnic Albanian armed groups in the Presevo area of southern Serbia and reiterates the call expressed in the statement of the President of the Security Council of 19 December 2000 for an immediate and complete cessation of violence in this area. The EU calls upon all involved to exercise maximum restraint and to resolve any differences exclusively through peaceful dialogue. The European Union welcomes specific measures taken by KFOR and UNMIK to address the problem, including increased surveillance of the administrative boundary.

The European Union also welcomes the commitment of the Yugoslav authorities to respect the provisions of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and the military-technical Agreement and encourages the efforts to initiate confidence-building measures in order to stabilize the situation in the area.

In order to further contribute to stabilizing the situation, the European Union is currently undertaking efforts to increase its monitoring presence in the affected area.

Mr. Mladenovic (Yugoslavia): At the outset, I would like to wish you, Mr. President, and your country, as well as the other new non-permanent members of the Security Council, a successful and productive tenure. I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his very useful briefing.

The situation in and around Kosovo and Metohija, the autonomous province of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia, is characterized by two different features. On one hand, we have the international community, including the countries of the region, making efforts to stabilize the situation in the field pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and the Kumanovo military-technical Agreement. On the other hand, there are major security problems in the Ground Safety Zone in parts of the municipalities of Bujanovac, Medvedja and Presevo, brought about by the incursions of ethnic Albanian terrorists and their attacks on the peaceful local population and Yugoslav security forces, as well as serious security problems in many localities in Kosovo and Metohija itself. The latter throws a very dark shadow over the overall picture, so it is necessary for the Security Council to continue, in accordance with its responsibilities, to take even more active measures to overcome this situation.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia continues to consider the calls made in the statement by the President of the Security Council of 19 December 2000 extremely relevant and expects them to be implemented in full and without delay. This relates in particular to the Council's calls for the immediate and complete cessation of violence in the Ground Safety Zone, for the dissolution of ethnic Albanian extremist groups and for the immediate withdrawal from the Ground Safety Zone of all those engaged in extremist activities.

Furthermore, my country's Government calls on the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to take more robust measures in controlling the administrative boundary in order to prevent terrorist incursions into the Ground Safety Zone, to stabilize the situation in it and to fulfil their other obligations under resolution 1244 (1999) and the Kumanovo military-technical Agreement.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia continues to be firmly committed to the quest for a solution to the present situation in the Ground Safety Zone, as well as for the comprehensive solution for Kosovo and Metohija, in a negotiated and peaceful way, proceeding from full respect for resolution 1244 (1999), as well as the obligations that the new Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its constituent Republic of Serbia have in ensuring the full protection of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country.

To stabilize the situation, the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has proposed that the Ground Safety Zone be either eliminated, narrowed or modified to put an end to the activities of ethnic Albanian terrorist groups. Bearing in mind the justifiability of this proposal, we expect that it will be given full support, and we are ready to negotiate the modalities of its implementation. Consultations with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to that end have already begun.

Proceeding from its firm commitment to a negotiated solution, the Government of my country is convinced that it is possible to bring about a lasting peace only by abiding by democratic principles, by building confidence among all residents of Kosovo and Metohija and by developing a democratic society. For that, it will be necessary to provide a secure environment for all and to speed up the process of the return of refugees and internally displaced persons and the establishment of dialogue between the representatives of the Albanian community in Kosovo and Metohija and the new democratic authorities in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia. I would like to add that the Government of the Republic of Serbia, with the assistance of the federal Government, is already making considerable efforts to integrate the entire population of the Ground Safety Zone into the institutions of the democratic civil society being built in our country.

Establishing better communications between the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia on the one hand, and UNMIK and KFOR on the other, will certainly be a major precondition in this regard. In that context, let me recall the readiness of my country to sign an agreement on the status of UNMIK with the United Nations.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish Mr. Hans Haekkerup success in his future endeavours as the Special Representative for Kosovo and head of UNMIK in implementing resolution 1244 (1999). In this he will have my Government's full support.

The use of depleted uranium ammunition during the NATO intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its aggression against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has brought about ever more vocal protests world wide, which are entirely justified. Considering

that effects of radiation on people and the environment are not limited in space and time, the international community is duty-bound to take urgent and all necessary measures to forestall its harmful wide-scale consequences.

My Government insists that all the facts be established and, in particular, that all the consequences be eliminated with the full cooperation of all relevant international actors, including the Security Council. The responsibility for the use of those weapons should be borne by those who authorized them, regardless of whether they were or were not aware of their harmful effects.

As a victim of depleted uranium ammunitions, the consequences of which are not yet fully known, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has the right to be informed precisely and comprehensively of their use. This also implies the right to international assistance in establishing the facts regarding the effects of radiation and, in particular, in decontaminating the affected areas. Needless to say, the greatest share of assistance should be provided by those who authorized the use of the weapons. At the same time, we believe that the possibility should be considered, within the overall United Nations disarmament effort, of initiating international action towards establishing a regime to ban the production and use of those weapons. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is ready to render its full contribution in this regard and calls on all other States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to join it in achieving this goal.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Singapore.

First, I wish to join colleagues in thanking Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his clear and useful briefing.

The United Nations has been involved in Kosovo for almost 20 months, in one of its larger and more complex peacekeeping operations, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Much has been achieved during this period. Mr. Bernard Kouchner, who has just relinquished the leadership of UNMIK, has said that advances have been made in the provision of electricity, the refurbishment of hospitals and schools, the relaunching of the economy, the creation of a Kosovo police force and judiciary and the reconstruction of about 100,000 homes. I commend Mr. Kouchner and UNMIK for their efforts and achievements in rebuilding Kosovo from devastation.

However, much more needs to be done. Before spelling out what these tasks are, let me first take this opportunity to publicly convey my warm congratulations and best wishes to Mr. Hans Haekkerup as he takes up his new responsibilities at the helm of UNMIK. He has taken on an awesome burden.

The Singapore delegation has said before in this Chamber that the peacekeeping operations in Kosovo appear to be conceptually unsound. There does not appear to be a clear exit strategy for the United Nations. But there also does not seem to be a better alternative to UNMIK, considering the circumstances in which the United Nations became involved in Kosovo. We should not stray from the course at this critical juncture of change in the leadership of UNMIK. The United Nations involvement in Kosovo and the strict implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) must continue, despite the great difficulties we face.

Our overall aim must be to return Kosovo to normalcy. Kosovo cannot be allowed to languish in its present state for ever. In this regard, the uniqueness of UNMIK as a United Nations peacekeeping operation, like the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, stands out. UNMIK is an administration in every sense of the word, albeit an interim one. Like any administration, it is responsible for building — or, more correctly, rebuilding — Kosovo in all its aspects: security, socio-political, economic and others. It is important that, having begun such a major undertaking, the United Nations not terminate it prematurely. It is therefore essential that we be clear on our goals and ensure that we achieve them. At the same time, the United Nations must always be conscious of the need to ensure efficiency and cost-effectiveness in its administration and use of resources.

In our view, there are three critical areas which need to be addressed in Kosovo. The first is the security situation in and around Kosovo. The politically motivated violence against the Kosovar minorities has increased again after the municipal elections in October last year. This does not do anyone any good. It certainly does not help Kosovo to progress towards normalcy. Every effort must therefore be made to curb such violence. We call on all the Kosovar ethnic communities to put an end to the killing and

maiming. All those who engage in such activities should be dealt with severely. We therefore call on UNMIK and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) to step up their efforts to ensure the security of all the ethnic communities, in particular the minorities, and also bring the perpetrators to justice. The coordination of the activities of the UNMIK police and KFOR by the joint UNMIK-KFOR Political Violence Task Force is certainly a step in the right direction.

The conflict in the Presevo Valley, just outside Kosovo, must also not be allowed to fester. It has the potential to destabilize the region and undo all the good that has been done in Kosovo. All acts of violence in the Presevo Valley, especially by extremist groups, must cease. We welcome the recent arrest of nine members of the Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac (UCPMB) by KFOR close to the administrative border with Serbia. UNMIK and KFOR should take further necessary measures to address the problem. We also welcome the fact that the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and representatives of the affected communities have started a dialogue. This could facilitate a resolution of the problem in the Presevo Valley. We urge the two sides to continue this dialogue.

The second area is reconciliation among the Kosovar ethnic communities. Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) is clear on the political status of Kosovo. This issue should not be allowed to further divide Kosovo, given all the ramifications for the region. Instead, efforts should be made to reconcile the various ethnic groups in Kosovo. Of course, this is easier said than done. But if there is movement in the right direction, all ethnic groups could benefit.

Promoting ethnic tolerance is a key to bringing together all ethnic communities. A simple test would be the free return of minority refugees in large numbers to Kosovo. Until then, we hope that the security framework developed by UNMIK and KFOR will encourage minority refugees to come back to Kosovo.

We should also address the hard issues that impede reconciliation. All political prisoners should be released. The whereabouts of all missing persons in Kosovo should be revealed. The recent change in the leadership of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbia provides hope for the early release of political prisoners. We hope that the missing persons issue will be resolved soon.

The third area is building self-governance capacity and economic recovery for Kosovo. UNMIK's efforts to build the institutions and capability in Kosovo for self-governance should be commended and supported. All the ethnic communities in Kosovo should be involved in this important process towards self-governance. However, Kosovo-wide elections should be held only when the proper conditions are in place.

Efforts should also be made to spur economic development in Kosovo. Steps should be taken to increase trade with and investments in Kosovo, as this will generate a positive spiral and return Kosovo to normalcy. When the Kosovars taste the fruits of economic growth, they will be more predisposed towards having a peaceful, stable and secure environment to further build the economy.

Let me conclude by making one important point: we should be realistic. Kosovo's return to normalcy is likely to take several more years. The continued involvement of the United Nations and the international community in Kosovo, and their patience in addressing these three critical areas, will therefore be crucial.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to Mr. Guéhenno to respond to the comments made.

Mr. Guéhenno: First, let me thank the Council for the warm support extended to the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General. As I said in my briefing, the support of the Council is essential to the success of the Mission and I will convey to Mr. Hans Haekkerup the kind words that were extended to him.

I would like to address the two issues that were raised by Ambassador Gatilov. First, on the work that would be done in Bern on the institutional framework for Kosovo, we are not aware of that work and, indeed, we would welcome any information on it. Secondly, the report on Racak is not in our hands. We have never seen it. We have been in contact with the delegation of the Russian Federation and we have used our good offices with various institutions to get our hands on it. We will continue to pursue those efforts.

The President: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus

concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4259

Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

4259th meeting

Friday, 19 January 2001, 10.30 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Jayakumar	(Singapore)
Members:	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Mauritius	Mr. Neewoor
	Norway	Ms. Sydnes
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchynski
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Holbrooke

Agenda

The responsibility of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security: HIV/AIDS and international peacekeeping operations.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

01-21967 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Expression of welcome to the Minister of International Development of Norway

The President: I should like to acknowledge the presence at the Council table of the Minister of International Development of Norway, Ms. Anne Kristin Sydnes. On behalf of the Council I extend a warm welcome to her.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The responsibility of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security: HIV/AIDS and international peacekeeping operations

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Canada, Costa Rica, India, Nigeria and Sweden, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Heinbecker (Canada), Mr. Niehaus (Costa Rica), Mr. Sharma (India), Mr. Mbanefo (Nigeria) and Ms. Schori (Sweden) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Guéhenno to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Dr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Dr. Piot to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I give the floor to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

Mr. Guéhenno: I had the opportunity less than a month ago to brief the Security Council during its informal consultations on the subject of HIV/AIDS and peacekeeping. I am grateful to have the opportunity today to speak on this subject again, in this open meeting.

Putting the issue in context, people of conscience cannot possibly turn away from the staggering tragedy of HIV/AIDS. I personally cannot but be thunderstruck by some of the most recent estimates of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organization about the epidemic, which bear repeating. I personally find it painful to comprehend that an estimated 3 million people around the world died of AIDS last year, and that 5.3 million were newly infected. Almost 22 million people have died of AIDS since the epidemic began, and Africa has buried three quarters of them. The continent could end up burying one third of today's 15-year-olds because of AIDS in the countries where the epidemic is most rampant. The problem is not, of course, restricted to Africa. Over 36 million people around the world are estimated to be living with HIV today. I am taking this opportunity, as a human being, to add my voice to Dr. Piot's in publicizing those statistics.

I want to address one issue that is of great concern to all of us. Is there a link between HIV/AIDS and peacekeeping? Is there a risk? As the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, the question I must ask myself is, what impact do 38,000 or even 50,000 peacekeepers deployed worldwide have on this epidemic that has affected tens of millions of people? And what can the Department of Peacekeeping

Operations (DPKO) do to make a contribution in helping to prevent its spread?

The reality is that a number of peacekeepers, like any sample of people from around the world, are likely to have been infected by HIV, prior to deployment, and this does not apply only to peacekeepers coming from countries with high prevalence rates.

It is also a fact that some, although certainly not all, of our peacekeeping missions are deployed to parts of the world where there is a relatively high incidence of HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, it is a fact that some peacekeepers are sexually active while on United Nations missions. That such risk behaviour takes place at all is an issue to which I will return later in my remarks, because it is an important one.

These few basic points alone should leave absolutely no one in doubt. It is undeniable that there is a risk of peacekeepers transmitting HIV, or of contracting HIV, while they are on mission. It stands to reason that this must have happened already. How big is the risk? We do not yet have the means to quantify the extent to which this has happened already, or to quantify the extent of the risk in the future. There are normal rules and norms for epidemiological research and collection of medical data which are especially important to follow when dealing with the issue of HIV/AIDS. However, the correct collection of such data is difficult for a variety of reasons, two in particular.

First, there is generally a lack of reliable and complete data on HIV/AIDS in the places in which peacekeepers deploy. The capacity of countries to collect epidemiological data on HIV/AIDS, if it ever existed, can be severely crippled by the outbreak of war. Thus, there is generally a lack of baseline data against which to judge the impact of a peacekeeping operation on the incidence of HIV/AIDS in the place of deployment. The development of local capacities in this area is therefore critical, and I join the appeal to the donors to increase their assistance for this purpose.

Secondly, we do not have reliable data on the prevalence of HIV among contingents. Member States, and not the United Nations, are responsible for the medical records of their contingents. National Governments do not, as a matter of practice, inform the United Nations that one or more of their personnel have contracted HIV/AIDS while on mission. Even if they were ready to do so, Member States would have had to test their personnel for HIV prior to deployment in order to know if the infection had been contracted while on mission, rather than beforehand.

DPKO, in cooperation with UNAIDS, welcomes any information from Member States that would help us to verify and understand the extent of the problem better, so that we might tailor our prevention strategies accordingly. In collecting data that could help to shape our future policies and programmes, it is, of course, essential to respect the confidentiality of individuals' medical records.

On a related note, just a few days ago DPKO put forward a proposal to Member States, within the context of the discussions of the so-called post-Phase V Working Group, for the United Nations to reimburse contributors for the costs of conducting HIV testing for their personnel, both pre-deployment and upon return. We believe that it would be an important and relatively minor investment for the Organization to make, while recognizing that it remains the prerogative of Member States to apply their respective policies on testing. We do, however, strongly recommend voluntary confidential testing and counselling.

In the interim, even without hard statistics in hand, there is no disputing that HIV/AIDS in general is a problem of massive proportions, and that peacekeepers are not exempt from it.

What are the key immediate challenges before us? While we cannot change what has happened already, the first step in mitigating future risks is to increase the awareness of peacekeepers, and those with whom they come in contact locally, about the causes of HIV/AIDS and the ways of preventing its spread.

The Security Council's ground-breaking and historic resolution 1308 (2000), adopted in July of last year, specifically recognized the importance of incorporating HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness skills in DPKO's training for peacekeeping personnel, as did the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, in its report of 20 March 2000. These issues were already important parts of the curriculum in all United Nations-organized training and orientation programmes for peacekeepers, but the strong support from the Security Council and the Special Committee definitely increased the extent to which Member States prioritize this issue in the training that they give to peacekeepers.

(spoke in French)

What can we do in order better to meet the challenges? As I said during informal consultations on 22 December last, the Training and Evaluation Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has developed a training module on medical issues for senior-level national trainers. The module, which is part of a broader training course on a variety of peacekeeping issues, generally lasts for two to three days, and 80 per cent of the material covered is dedicated to HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention. In the past six months, the Service has conducted three such regional "train the trainers" courses in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Ghana. Furthermore, these programmes were incorporated into the peacekeeping training course for human rights and humanitarian assistance for military officers and civilian police trainers, held in Turin, Italy, in November last year. In 2001, we plan to organize sessions in Nepal, for Asia; Kenya, for Africa; in Bosnia, for Europe; and in Latin America, in a city yet to be determined.

The Training and Evaluation Service of DPKO, UNAIDS and the Civilian Military Alliance to Combat HIV and AIDS (CMA) have collaborated in producing a number of publications that are distributed to all participants in the "train the trainers" courses. Some of them include — I'll cite them in English, since most are in English —

(spoke in English)

> "Protect Yourself and Those You Care About against HIV/AIDS", "Policy Guidelines on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control for Military Planners and Commanders", and "HIV Prevention and Behaviour Change in International Military Populations".

(spoke in French)

The Department's Training and Evaluation Service has distributed these publications widely, in particular to peacekeeping missions, and to Member States and training institutions worldwide. Furthermore, the United Nations tries to supplement any instruction that its military personnel might have received during national training by providing each soldier with a pocket-sized aide-mémoire. I have brought with me to the Council Chamber copies of some of this material for those who might be interested in seeing it. These materials are supplemented with other practical measures, such as ensuring the easy availability of prophylactics for people on missions.

To ensure that the material provided to peacekeepers is as easy to understand and accessible as possible, the Department is now in the process of producing a "pocket card" with basic facts on codes of conduct and HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention. We are now seeking funding so as to be able to translate and print this document in the languages of the personnel and soldiers who serve in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Last month the Medical Support Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, working in partnership with the World Health Organization, prepared and distributed to all uniformed personnel and to all civilian personnel an HIV/AIDS awareness message to commemorate International HIV/AIDS Day. This message focused not only on the need for increasing all personnel's awareness of HIV/AIDS but also on the importance of not treating as outcasts those who, unfortunately, have been infected with the virus. Of course, the Unit intends to repeat this message in 2001.

United Nations civilian staff members of peacekeeping operations receive detailed briefing material on the topic of HIV/AIDS in the course of their predeployment orientation. Since many staff members join their new missions without visiting Headquarters here in New York beforehand, our services continue their policy of providing additional briefings and instruction at the field level in order to create an awareness among staff members of the risks of HIV/AIDS. In this setting, staff members receive, upon their arrival in the field, copies of brochures such as "AIDS and HIV Infection: Information for United Nations Employees and Their Families."

United Nations medical personnel in the field receive detailed guidelines on medical procedures for treating cases of sexually transmitted diseases, and, of course, all matters related to HIV/AIDS are an important part of this training. The medical staff is guided, in this regard, by the "Medical Support Manual for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations", in which chapters 5 and 6 focus significantly on HIV/AIDS and related issues.

How can we enhance our efforts? Indeed, we want to do more.

In addition to the various training activities that have been ongoing for some time, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is also pursuing a number of new initiatives.

Furthermore, all budgets for new missions now include provisions for HIV/AIDS training and education programmes. The Department is currently seeking funding for improving our longstanding system, which we want to expand, for making prophylactics readily available and accessible in all missions. In future, we want to conduct this programme on a broader scale.

The Department's Medical Support Unit has submitted a number of suggestions for revising the contingent-owned equipment manual. In these proposals, we stress the responsibility of national contingents for in-mission HIV/AIDS awareness and training. These suggestions were included in the background material for the post-Phase V Working Group, which is deliberating this very week here in New York. In addition, the Department has suggested that all United Nations level II and III medical facilities must provide adequate facilities for testing and counselling, and also must provide post-exposure treatment for sexually abused women and for health professionals who might have been accidentally infected.

Even though the Department has been addressing problems related to HIV/AIDS for quite some time now, especially from a training perspective, I am convinced that the reactivation and further development of the Medical Support Unit has helped, and will help in future, to put in place an even more systematic approach to these difficult issues. In this respect, our efforts to fill all of the positions in the Medical Support Unit will continue to be accorded the highest priority.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is now a fully fledged partner, within the United Nations system, in the global fight against the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and regularly coordinates its efforts with our colleagues in the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and with Dr. Piot, who is here today. The Department actively participated in the expert strategy meeting held in Sweden a few weeks ago, at which we had the satisfaction of seeing that proposals for a systematic approach to dealing with the issue of HIV/AIDS had gained the full support of the experts at that meeting.

The chief of the Department's Medical Support Unit, who is here today, has been formally appointed as the Department's focal point for HIV/AIDS, and he participates in a policy group that includes representatives from UNAIDS and Department of Peacekeeping Operations personnel working with gender and humanitarian issues. The Department's Medical Support Unit and the Training and Evaluation Service are also working in close cooperation within the Department to improve HIV/AIDS-related training and training materials, with the strong support of UNAIDS. We are very grateful for that assistance from UNAIDS, which allows the document to take into account the most recent research on best ways of presenting these issues to the public.

The Medical Support Unit has also initiated a project to formulate a job description for an HIV/AIDS focal point in every mission from now on. Such a focal point would be an integrated part of mission headquarters' training units, and would dedicate his or her efforts to coordinating HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention before, during and after missions.

Lastly, I am very pleased today to join Dr. Piot in announcing that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNAIDS this very morning signed a memorandum of understanding that further develops and institutionalizes the close cooperative relationship between our respective organizations. This memorandum of understanding reaffirms our will to increase HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in peacekeeping missions within the overall strategic framework and technical support provided by UNAIDS, to which I again pay tribute. It is essential for us.

How do we measure the impact of our efforts, and what more can we do to be even more effective? Member States of this Organization have now agreed that HIV/AIDS awareness is important for all peacekeepers. DPKO, together with UNAIDS and with its partners, is resolutely involved in the fight against AIDS, within the resources that we have been given. At the same time, we must continually ask ourselves if we are doing enough. I have already mentioned that much more needs to be done for us to accurately quantify the extent of the problem and thus quantify the impact of our efforts.

At the same time, this issue is not just about epidemiological research and medical data. Awareness-heightening initiatives must also be evaluated, qualitatively, in terms of what impact they have on the behaviour of our personnel in the field.

If even a small minority of personnel in the field continues to demonstrate unacceptable risk behaviour, then we have clearly failed to make them aware, and we must do more to make them aware.

Our awareness and training programmes must not stop at HIV/AIDS either. Some of the same behaviour that increases the chances of contracting or transmitting HIV, such as engaging in sexual contact with prostitutes, is unacceptable and can damage seriously the image of a peacekeeping operation within the community where it is deployed. Such behaviour offends the people we are sent to help. It can damage the credibility of a contingent or an entire operation. And such behaviour can overshadow the exemplary efforts of the great majority of United Nations personnel engaged in the pursuit of peace.

In this respect, it is not just about HIV/AIDS awareness. It is about awareness of the responsibility of all peacekeepers for the image they project in the countries where they are deployed and the image of the United Nations in general. It is not just about the practice of safe sex and responsible sex. It is about the practice of respect for human beings, a respect that is at the very basis of the work of the United Nations and at the basis of the values that the Organization and its Members uphold. This is what is at stake in our effort.

Peacekeepers must therefore constantly be made aware of their responsibilities and of the possible consequences of their actions and behaviour. This is why I wholeheartedly support the increased awareness that today's debate makes possible, because this goes right to the heart of an essential responsibility of our Organization. It is my intention to continue discussions with Member States, including within the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, to raise the standards of behaviour and of discipline that we expect of all United Nations peacekeepers in the field, whether they be military, civilian, or police.

In general terms, we must continue to evaluate the effectiveness of all our programmes and activities, and revise and improve our materials, so that they can have the maximum impact.

We need to move quickly in order to fully staff DPKO to the limits authorized by the General Assembly, and during the comprehensive review that we will conduct of peacekeeping activities, we will also examine the necessary staffing levels related to the issues I have touched upon today.

We need to enhance the dialogue on this subject with those in the countries where we are deployed.

I have already written, and will be writing again, to all special representatives of the Secretary-General in the field on the issue of HIV/AIDS and peacekeeping, so that our personnel in the field continue to have the best guidance from us on this vital issue.

In closing, we cannot deny that HIV/AIDS is a problem of global and tragic proportions. Any step that can be taken to address any aspect of this problem is a step in the right direction. If the Department of Peacekeeping Operations can be a small part of the solution of this immense problem, rest assured that we will do everything within our power to contribute to the solution.

The President: I now give the floor to Dr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS.

Dr. Piot: Just one year has passed since the Security Council made history with its first debate on AIDS, and already I am appearing before the Council for the third time on this subject.

As someone who is immersed full-time in global AIDS politics and practice, I can tell the Council that its deliberations on AIDS have been enormously helpful. I do not think that can be overestimated. The simple fact that the world's ultimate tribunal on questions of peace and security devotes its attention to AIDS sends a very powerful message.

In acknowledging the significant difference the Security Council has made, I must also pay tribute to its leading advocate, Ambassador Richard Holbrooke. I can think of no better legacy to leave the world than to have ensured that the United Nations Security Council now regards the global fight against AIDS as part of its core business. Thank you for that.

The Security Council has helped transform the way in which AIDS is viewed. Only when we understand AIDS as a fundamental issue of human

security can we grasp the extent of destruction it has caused, how insidiously it has exacerbated conditions of poverty and vulnerability, and the long-term effects of its impact.

The global resolve to tackle AIDS has increased markedly in the six months since the Council's meeting held on 17 July. Many countries have revamped their AIDS plans, have made them more central to decision-making across government and have sought new resources and ways to direct them to the local community level. Many heads of State or Government at the Millennium Summit highlighted AIDS. Initiatives placing HIV in the mainstream of development took place at the G-8 meeting in Okinawa, in the European Commission and among many bilateral donors. Regional efforts have intensified as well, notably, in the Caribbean under the auspices of the Caribbean Community, with the commitment of the Association of South-East Asian Nations to a summit on HIV in South-East Asia and with a summit of the Organization of African Unity coming up in April in Nigeria.

Last month the Economic Commission for Africa hosted the African Development Forum for the second time. Its theme, "AIDS: The greatest leadership challenge", was given weight by the seven heads of State or Government who attended and their interaction with leaders of civil society, including people with HIV/AIDS and youth. Ms. Graça Machel articulated the sense of urgency at the meeting, saying,

> "any international support ... can only be additional to our own efforts and it will be our own efforts that bring us rewards in this struggle".

One recent important opportunity has been new debt relief agreements, which have liberated resources and helped integrate AIDS into national planning. They have already resulted in some of the poorest countries in Africa allocating $20 million more for AIDS in 2001 out of their own budgets, thanks to debt relief.

However, much, if not most, of the global agenda on AIDS is unfinished, including the continuing inequities in access to effective care and treatments and even to life-saving materials, such as condoms. Last year saw increasing acceptance by Governments and industry of the moral legitimacy of equity pricing. This is the idea that poorer countries should be able to buy essential drugs at lower prices than wealthy countries. But creating mechanisms to implement equitable access has been painfully and unacceptably slow. Let us not forget that the progress on comprehensive HIV care will have to advance on multiple fronts simultaneously.

Meanwhile, as members have heard, the HIV epidemic advances. In the report we released for World AIDS Day last month we estimated that there were 5.3 million new HIV infections around the globe last year. Over 3 million people died as a result of AIDS — more annual deaths than ever. This global situation is the context within which the UNAIDS secretariat and co-sponsors have been addressing Security Council resolution 1308 (2000).

In January, a year ago, I made four key commitments to the Security Council. The first was to intensify the International Partnership against AIDS in Africa. This we have done, and its Framework for Action, with specific milestones, has been widely endorsed, including by the Organization of African Unity summit in Lomé last July. Over the past 12 months much of the work of the UNAIDS secretariat and co-sponsors in Africa has focused on the development of this Partnership. This work culminated in its formal launch by Secretary-General Annan in Addis Ababa at the African Development Forum, where he declared,

> "that from now on across all of Africa it will be the focus for a new spirit of cooperation in building the response to AIDS."

The second commitment I made a year ago was to have regular follow-up with the Security Council. Here we are today. This we have done at Security Council meetings and in our regular reports focusing on AIDS in relation to peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts.

The third commitment I made was to intensify information flow on international responses to the epidemic. This we have done with updated epidemiological and response information from the Mapping the AIDS Pandemic project, with information management networks for West Africa, in South and South-East Asia and in Latin America. At last month's African Development Forum we released a UNAIDS country-by-country report that documents both the impact of AIDS on Africa country-by-country and the strengthening of national responses. We are now expanding this work to other parts of the world.

Fourthly, I undertook to make specific plans to address HIV/AIDS in emergencies and the uniformed services. The UNAIDS Humanitarian Coordination Unit, established in June 2000, has, with the significant involvement of our co-sponsors, made country assessment missions to Ethiopia and Eritrea, East Timor and Burundi. A mission to Sierra Leone will take place very shortly. The missions are to assess locally specific risk factors for HIV, prepare AIDS prevention strategies and train trainers in prevention and behaviour change so that peacekeepers can become agents of change and HIV prevention.

In July the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator Mark Malloch Brown and I wrote to United Nations Resident Coordinators in particular countries affected by conflict to ensure that AIDS, as a humanitarian and security issue, was at the top of the agenda of the United Nations system in these countries.

Jean-Marie Guéhenno mentioned earlier that a strategy meeting to examine AIDS as a security issue was held in Stockholm in December, involving Governments, military representatives, the United Nations system and representatives of non-governmental organizations. The report and recommendations arising from the meeting are currently being circulated among the meeting's participants and will soon be finished.

We have been working with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, alongside our co-sponsors — in particular UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Population Fund — to focus on the elevated risk of HIV in conflict and humanitarian situations. HIV has an impact on refugees, United Nations and non-governmental organization personnel and host communities. So HIV prevention and care must be core concerns because of the interaction of these populations, and therefore preventing the spread of HIV and ensuring the availability of adequate care is equally important to them all.

As members just heard, earlier today I joined Jean-Marie Guéhenno to sign a cooperation framework agreement between UNAIDS and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Under this framework, we commit to improving the capacity of peacekeepers to become advocates of and actors for the awareness and prevention of HIV transmission.

The agreement will support our ongoing work in, first, training; secondly, in the development of codes of conduct; thirdly, in voluntary and confidential counselling and testing; fourthly, in civil-military cooperation; fifthly, in the care and treatment of affected personnel; sixth, in guaranteeing an uninterrupted supply of male and female condoms; and lastly, in disseminating best practices. At the field level, together with representatives of local populations and non-governmental organizations, we will cooperate to promote sustainable measures to prevent HIV transmission.

It is incumbent on the United Nations to set the highest possible standards for the conduct of the troops deployed under its flag. Every effort must be made to ensure that peacekeepers conduct themselves according to appropriate codes of conduct and have the best possible means to protect themselves and the populations with whom they are in contact.

The role of HIV testing in peacekeeping operations is a complex issue, and nothing raises the emotional temperature of these debates more quickly. But for that reason I have decided to establish, in conjunction with Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno, a senior expert panel to analyse and formulate a comprehensive position on the issue of HIV testing for peacekeepers and humanitarian personnel.

The global response to AIDS gathered momentum last year. It must build even further this year. I am greatly heartened by the Council's close attention to AIDS.

When the General Assembly holds its special session on AIDS in June, all Member States will have the chance to pledge their commitment to the fight. That session is an opportunity for more than fine words — it needs to produce tangible outcomes.

So the commitments of 2001 need to be real: real money deposited in real bank accounts to cover the real, more than $3 billion shortfall just to meet Africa's most urgent needs for prevention and basic care; real reductions in drug prices for poor countries; real leadership to tackle the stigma and galvanize national action against AIDS; real participation of people with HIV in decision-making. Only when these commitments become a reality can we hope to respond adequately to the reality of the epidemic.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of the United States, but before I give the floor to Ambassador Holbrooke, let me first express a sentiment that I am sure is shared by all those in this Chamber.

We are all aware that this will be the last appearance of Ambassador Holbrooke in his capacity as Pe.manent Representative of the United States to the United Nations. I believe it is fitting that his last meeting with us be for a discussion of HIV/AIDS, a matter on which Ambassador Holbrooke has made a sterling contribution to raising international concerns on this matter. This is only one of his many contributions to the United Nations community. I am sure I speak on behalf of everyone in this room when I say that he will be missed in the United Nations when he leaves. His stint in the United Nations caps a long and distinguished history in the field of diplomacy, including the historic achievement of peace in the Balkans.

Ambassador Holbrooke is an old friend of Singapore and of the South-East Asia region. My Government will not forget his valuable contribution to enhancing stability in South-East Asia at a critical juncture of our history, when he was Assistant Secretary for Asia and the Pacific in the Carter Administration. We are glad that he kept in touch with us during these years, and we hope that he will continue to do so when he moves to a new career.

Those who know you, Ambassador Holbrooke, have no doubt that you will continue to play a very important role in political and public affairs in the United States of America. We wish you all the best, and we have no doubt that you will do well in your new career.

I would like to call on the members of the Council to join me in a round of applause before I give the floor to Ambassador Holbrooke.

Mr. Holbrooke (United States of America): I am deeply moved by your remarks, Mr. President, and I thank you not only for the remarks, but for adjusting your schedule so that you could remain here to preside over this important meeting. You spoke accurately about my respect and affection for Singapore, a country I first visited in 1966, shortly after it became independent. It is a country for which I have the greatest of respect, and which is represented so ably by my old friend Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani, whom I have known for more than 25 years. I am deeply honoured that you are presiding here today, and that we are also joined by the Minister of International Development of Norway and by my other friends here.

I am also very deeply honoured by the presence in the Chamber of so many friends, my own family, students from Columbia and Barnard and friends of mine from private life, as well as so many prominent members of the HIV/AIDS community. These include Mercy Makhalamele, who, many of you will remember was the heroic figure in Ed Bradley's great one-hour special on AIDS that came out last year; Dr. Mathilde Krim of the American Foundation for AIDS research; Joshua Lederberg, the great Nobel Prize winner in medicine; my great friend Senator Tim Wirth, who is now the President of the United Nations Foundation, who is seated behind me in that tie that he and I and Ted Turner and others wear; and so many other friends of ours.

It is very fitting that the last Security Council meeting I will participate in as United States Ambassador addresses this issue, because I think it marks one of the great steps forward for the United Nations in the last year. I am very pleased that we have just heard two important addresses, by Under Secretary-General Guéhenno and Dr. Piot, and I am also very grateful that, in the absence of our great Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General, Louise Fréchette, is with us today.

This is our third open meeting on HIV/AIDS in the last year. A little over a year ago, 10 January 2000 to be precise, Vice-President Gore opened the first such meeting and the first meeting of the new millennium, and the first meeting ever on a health issue. More than 4,000 meetings had preceded it. I am so pleased that this Council has participated in broadening the definition of security. I know it was not always easy to do, and I remember the controversy surrounding that initial meeting. My friend to my right, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, passed me a hand-written note in the middle of the meeting, saying, with characteristic British understatement, "I dare say this is the first time the word "condoms" has been used in the Security Council." Now we just throw that word around.

We debated at first whether we ought to be debating the issue at all, whether it was a security threat, or whether the Security Council, the highest international body legitimizing international

involvement across borders should even address the issue at all. I know that many countries in the room, going back to the historic roots of the United Nations, had doubts about it. But I think we should all look back on the last year, and, bearing in mind the important statements made by the two previous speakers, say, "It was worth it."

And why was it worth it? For the simplest of reasons. It appears now that if the Security Council continues its work, and the cooperation we heard about earlier today — cooperation that not only did not exist, but was not even contemplated until recently — continues, the Council will actually do what it is supposed to do: save lives.

But I am not deluding myself. This is a tough issue. I know there are some Governments, including many that are not on the Security Council, that think this issue ought to be left entirely to the Economic and Social Council. I understand that point, and I am deeply, deeply honoured that so many non-Security Council members are here in the audience today. These are my dear friends among the diplomatic corps, and I will say a personal word to them at the end of my comments on AIDS. I am pleased that they are here to register their concern.

I particularly want to address, as I did yesterday in the Kosovo debate, the issue of the troop-contributing countries. I believe in transparency of deliberations, and I believe in the maximum involvement in the Security Council deliberations, within the current rules of the Security Council, of countries other than its 15 members. We also have recommended a revision of the Security Council structure. I hope that going forward, the Security Council will grow to be more representative. It is a difficult issue, but meanwhile, until this is done — and it is going to be a tough issue — I am just delighted that so many of our colleagues are here today to learn, to exchange views and to give us more input.

As I leave here — having worked with Council members day and night on the crises in the Middle East, Kosovo, Bosnia, East Timor, Sierra Leone, Congo, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Iraq — it is clear that, as horrible as these conflicts are, and as pressing as the need is to resolve them, the issue that is common to every one of them is the issue we are here to discuss today. I have elsewhere called it the most important and biggest problem in the world today, and I am often questioned about that. But I say that because all the other issues are specific problems — they can be solved; they will be solved — but if we do not address AIDS, it will go on and on. Because of the long incubation period of the disease, because of the stigma attached to it and because of the way it is spread, it will kill more people and undermine more societies than even the worst conflicts that we deal with here. I thank all my colleagues on the Security Council for opening up this issue to Security Council debate, and I urge them to continue.

I first came into direct contact with this issue — that of the connection between peacekeepers and AIDS — when I was in Cambodia in 1992. My son, who is sitting behind Ambassador Cunningham, has handed me a note which I will read out in part to the Council because he wants to take credit for this meeting. It says,

> "Dad, remember our trip to Cambodia, when I first brought this very important problem — United Nations peacekeepers spreading AIDS — to your attention".

So I thank my son for convening this meeting. In point of fact, we did see in 1992 the issue that we are here to discuss. At that time, I wrote Under-Secretary-General Yasushi Akashi a letter saying that it would be the cruelest of ironies if people who had come to Cambodia to end the war were spreading an even more deadly disease. Finally, eight years later, we are starting to do something about it.

I cannot say we are winning this war, but I have heard some positive things this morning. I want to acknowledge those because, as the Under-Secretary-General knows, I am going to make some critical comments in a moment. I hope that we all listen to the very important statements concerning the joint memorandum, the conferences that you are going to hold and the line-item in the peacekeeping budget. I stress that the latter should not be a voluntary fund issue but, rather, a regular part of the budget. I think that the idea of a pocket card for peacekeepers is a very good one. I think that a focal point at the headquarters of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) is essential. And I am very gratified by the signs of cooperation.

I would point out to our guests that when we met in closed session on this same issue only a month ago no one from the Joint United Nations Programme on

HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) was present. I complained very strongly about the absence of UNAIDS at that meeting and at the fact that the meeting was closed. I thought that the world and other member nations and ambassadors should have been here. Every other ambassador in this room supported that call, which is why we are meeting publicly today. It was only a month ago that we were unable to hold this meeting in public. Transparency is the only way to deal with this disease because of its unique nature and the way in which it is spread.

I would also like to draw members' attention to the fact that Secretary of State-designate Colin Powell, who will assume office tomorrow, addressed this issue in very strong terms at his confirmation hearing the day before yesterday. I would also like to draw the Council's attention to a related subject, namely, the fact that he endorsed very strongly the reform effort of the United Nations and pledged himself to continue that effort, as well as to improve United States support for the United Nations financially.

Let me turn now to resolution 1308 (2000), which is the resolution we are here to discuss today. I hope that the number 1308 will become as famous to followers of the United Nations and to people who care about this issue as other famous numbers in United Nations Security Council history, like 242 — probably the most famous of all Council resolutions — on the Middle East, 1967; or 338, on the Middle East; or 1244, on Kosovo, or 1284, on Iraq. Resolution 1308 (2000) should be as well known as those resolutions, and it should be fully implemented. It should not be the end of the process, but only a cornerstone for future efforts.

I was encouraged by your remarks, Dr. Piot and Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno, because you both recognize the deadly nature of this disease. As I said a moment ago, it is the cruelest of all United Nations ironies that every time we vote to establish a peacekeeping mission, we are unintentionally helping to spread a killer disease. That is not necessary. But this is a complicated issue. Under the present structure of the United Nations, of course, every country contributing troops sets its own standards for testing and treatment. Some countries like my own and others, which I congratulate, will not send a soldier overseas unless he or she has been tested. If they test positive they are not sent overseas; they are given treatment. But other countries that do not have our resources do not carry out such testing, either because they consider it to be socially or culturally unacceptable, or because of its costs, or because — and I must be honest here — the incident rate of infection is so high that they do not want to reveal that they will not be able to field a peacekeeping force.

Of course, all of us who have travelled in Africa, or other parts of the world where this disease is raging — as my wife Kati and I did last year — have seen the stigma attached to being found HIV-positive. I want to say to my friends in countries that have been hard-hit that this is not an attempt to say that the United States knows better than other countries. All the Americans in the Chamber can remember very well when the stigma in this country was as great as it is today in other countries. Even with the benefits of instantaneous communication and a sense that we are enlightened — and I say "sense" because I think that we were not enlightened in the United States on this issue — I can remember very clearly, and I am sure every American in the Chamber can remember too, when people were afraid that a handshake could transmit AIDS. That was the level of ignorance in the United States. Therefore, when we talk about stigma and de-stigmatization, I want to stress that there is nothing here that should be read as implying any kind of cultural superiority. The United States has confronted this problem belatedly and inadequately, and we still have trouble with it.

Of course, we are here to discuss peacekeeping. But it cannot be underlined too much that this is the smallest fraction of the world-wide problem. When we talk about this I hope that we are also talking about the larger issue.

The compromise that was worked out under resolution 1308 (2000) was that the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations was going to do a hands-on, aggressive job of education. I laud your efforts and I laud the new agreement, but here I must be frank. I must say some words that will not be entirely enjoyable to the people in DPKO. I say this with great reluctance because, as all of you know, in the 17 months that I have been Ambassador the United States Mission has worked endlessly to strengthen DPKO — it has been our strongest single theme — and because I have the highest personal respect for Jean-Marie Guéhenno and his team; because I fully support the Brahimi report and Deputy Secretary-General Fréchette's implementation plan — which I hope will

be completed this year — and because no one needs more people than DPKO, which has barely 400 people do deal with crises throughout the world and which is understaffed for such pressing problems as the Congo, Sierra Leone, East Timor, Lebanon and Kosovo. To add this burden in the midst of all that is genuinely difficult, I know the Department is under-staffed and that the loss of gratis personnel has made it more difficult. Getting resources to DPKO has been a crusade of mine. I do not like to end my tenure here with anything less than very generous praise of an organization that I admire and which has been under intense pressure.

Quite frankly, despite what we have heard today, I am still not satisfied. The mandate of DPKO under resolution 1308 (2000) is clear, and I wish to read it. It calls for

> "further steps towards the provision of training for peacekeeping personnel on issues related to preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS and to continue the further development of pre-deployment orientation and ongoing training for all peacekeeping personnel on these issues". (*para. 3*)

Until today, I was prepared to say that nothing had been done to implement resolution 1308 (2000). But on the basis of what has been said by the two previous speakers, I am ready to say that a start has been made. But it has been six months since the resolution was passed. Up until today, the answer was a resounding "no".

I must share with the Council one example. My friend Jean-Marie Guéhenno cited it, and therefore I will cite it too — these two books which he says have been given out to people. I have read them very carefully, and I urge all of you to read them and ask yourselves whether or not these books are conceivably usable for United Nations peacekeepers.

First of all, they were written five years ago. Neither of them mentions resolution 1308 (2000). Secondly, one would need a magnifying glass to find out what AIDS does to a person. On page 10, in very small print, it mentions — and this is the only mention — that all people who are HIV positive eventually die. Well, thank you. Why is that not on the cover? And these books are very sexually explicit. I do not want to talk here about any euphemisms. The books are very clear on how AIDS is transmitted, but they are not user-friendly to the average soldier in the field unless he has an advanced degree from a college or institution of higher learning. They are technical, wordy, not clear-cut and out of date. I also do not believe that the book on policy guidelines for United Nations military planners is conceivably usable. And, again, they are five years old, reissued and edited slightly, but they do not even mention resolution 1308 (2000). Therefore, the United Nations peacekeeping commanders do not know, at least not from these books, that this is a mandated responsibility of the Security Council.

Now, I am being blunt about this because lives are at stake. I know these books can be rewritten, that they can be made clearer and that they can be made more useful to troops in the field at lower levels.

A second point: the Under-Secretary-General referred to tasking the Medical Support Unit of DPKO, whose chief is seated behind Jean-Marie Guéhenno now. I commend him for doing this, but it is my understanding that the Medical Support Unit is responsible for all medical issues. It is also my understanding that of five available slots — an inadequate number — only two are filled, and that therefore there are three empty slots out of five in that office. I think that we need to ask DPKO not only to fill the empty slots, but to create an office dedicated specifically to this issued, in furtherance of the mandate given to it by the Security Council.

Again, I say this not in a hostile sense, but in a hortatory sense, like a coach at halftime saying, "We are making some progress; let's do more".

We spend billions of dollars on peacekeeping at the United Nations. We spend millions to protect our peacekeepers from terrorist attacks and from hostile forces. But I do not think we are spending even $500,000 yet to protect them from HIV/AIDS. I do not know the exact figure because we were unable to obtain it, but it is very small.

Let me make some very brief suggestions. First, as regards personnel, I have already said that I hope that the Department will staff itself fully and will set up a separate unit. Secondly, the most difficult issue of all — testing. What I have heard from Dr. Piot this morning is very encouraging. No issue is more difficult for the Member States of the United Nations and, in particular, for the troop-contributing countries — countries that are doing something of indispensable

importance to the United Nations. I commend the troop-contributing countries. I recognize that the costs of testing are real, and that the cost of treatment, which should be available to all those tested, is prohibitively expensive in the current situation.

We would suggest that DPKO add the costs of pre- and post-deployment HIV testing into the cost of its operations so that the costs are not picked up separately by the troop-contributing countries. It should be a standard line item in the peacekeeping budget. It will increase the budget, but it is so important that I cannot imagine that it would not be appropriate to do so.

I understand that testing technologies are on their way to the market that are 99.9 per cent accurate and will cost less than three dollars.

The challenge of peacekeepers as vectors of HIV is not largely, or even primarily, the burden of DPKO, but the Department should become more engaged. Prevention, testing, identification, treatment and education — all are squarely on the shoulders of the nations that contribute troops to the peacekeeping operations.

Resolution 1308 (2000) calls on the troop contributors to create effective strategies for HIV/AIDS education, prevention, voluntary and confidential testing, counselling and treatment of personnel.

The Defense Department of the United States was last year — the current fiscal year — given $10 million additionally by Congress for the first time to assist other nations with this task. Ten million dollars is not a lot, but in this particular field it can be very helpful. So now, for the first time, the United States Department of Defense has joined in the effort to assist the militaries of other nations. I am very pleased about that. I worked directly with Secretary of Defense Cohen and the Congress to get that $10 million, and I hope it will be part of the next budget in the new Administration.

I want to close the section on AIDS simply by reiterating what I said at the beginning. I am honoured that I have been part of this effort. I am deeply touched by the words of Dr. Piot and of the Foreign Minister of Singapore. I am honoured by the plaque awarded me this morning, and I hope that the special session of the General Assembly on AIDS, from 25-27 June, will be a success and will work not only on the peacekeeping part of this issue, but on the global issue.

My comments and criticism should be read, and all of you who have worked with me over the last 17 months know this, not as hostile, but as an attempt to encourage you to do more.

I think it is fitting that I end this section of my remarks by quoting Kofi Annan, my great friend and, in my view, the finest Secretary-General in the history of the United Nations. I should say parenthetically that it was Kofi Annan who first suggested that I spend time on this issue in this job. Our Secretary-General said

> "We know that we came too late to this tragedy. I know that as Secretary-General of the United Nations the response has been painfully slow in the great multilateral community. But finally we are galvanized. We must make people everywhere understand that it is not over. It is not about a few foreign countries far away. It is a threat to an entire generation; a threat to an entire civilization."

Let me now close with some personal remarks about the United Nations, about the Security Council and about my 17 months in this job.

First, let me begin by thanking all my colleagues on the Security Council, my friends in the international Secretariat and my fellow diplomats. The international civil servants of the Secretariat who work so hard for Kofi Annan and Louise Fréchette have also borne the brunt of the pressure and occasional criticism from me, including this morning. That is my job. My job was to encourage you to do better. But I am always aware of the fact that many of you are overworked and understaffed, particularly in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and I admire and appreciate your good work. This is particularly true of the refugee workers and peacekeepers, the staff of UNAIDS, and the World Food Programme and all the specialized agencies that we have seen in such awfully difficult places as Kupang, in West Timor, and Atambua, where three brave members of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees were slaughtered last year, one of them an American; it is true of the brave people who live in places like Luanda, under intolerable conditions, that they do not need to work in; but are there because they care; and of the people who have worked for the United Nations all

over the world. That is what we are here to support, and there is no nobler cause.

Secondly, I want to address my friends in the red seats — in the diplomatic corps. I have said before publicly — and I say again today — that in 38 years in and out of the Government, this is the best diplomatic corps, from a professional point of view, that I have ever worked with. There are more world-class diplomats — professionals in the best sense of the word — around this table, in this group — although some are not here today — than I could possibly name. The quality of the diplomats is extraordinary, and their commitment to what we are doing is extraordinary.

I understand fully why we differed many times on issues. People keep saying to me, "What's wrong with the United Nations?"; and I say, "What United Nations do you mean? The United Nations has 189 Members, and each ambassador is representing his or her country's national interests." The "collective will of mankind" is a nice phrase, but it is meaningless when we are up against the complexities of the problems that we have dealt with here.

All have represented their countries with great skill. In many ways I most admire some of the ambassadors with whom I have had the most serious confrontations, for the skill and generosity with which we fought a battle, won or lost it, and moved on to the next battle as friends and colleagues. There is not a member of the Security Council that has not differed with the United States on some major issue in the past 17 months. In fact, within the past 24 hours we discussed an issue on which the United States was completely isolated; my friends to my left and right, from Bangladesh and the United Kingdom, were hammering us and, because we are very reasonable people, we gave up.

We all differ; that is what we are here for. Openness in the United Nations, and more transparency and flexibility, in which we put outcome ahead of process is important. My greatest criticism of this institution, really, is about the dominance of process over outcome. The United Nations has its own language, as we all know. "Permanent" means "temporary", as in my job. "Temporary" means "permanent", as in Israel's membership in the Group of Western and other States. When anyone says to me that it is a question of principle, I always know that it is a question of process. That is the way the United Nations works. But put outcome over process, and we will accomplish even more. That is what we did here today. There was a procedure that did not allow for a health issue in the Security Council; we broke through, and now we are having a productive discussion which will save lives. We can do that on very many other issues.

So I want to thank the diplomatic corps; they are an exceptional group of people. I cherish their friendship, as does my wife, Kati. By the way, we want to make a public service announcement: we lived in New York before this job; we are going to stay in New York. We are New Yorkers, and we hope to see all of you and continue our friendship.

I also want to say to the Secretary-General — and I hope that the Deputy Secretary-General will convey this to him — that it has been my greatest honour and privilege not only to call Kofi Annan a friend, but to work under his leadership and under that of the Deputy Secretary-General and her colleagues. Without question, he is the finest Secretary-General in this Organization's history. I am sure that I speak for almost everyone else — I hope, everyone else in this Chamber — and the whole United Nations community when I ask her to thank him on my behalf for his tireless efforts on behalf of the world's needy, hungry and forgotten.

Representing anyone's nation in the United Nations is an awesome responsibility and one that must not be taken lightly. What we do matters; what we do not do — what we fail to do — can also matter. Day in and day out we are confronted with questions that challenge our collective conscience — questions of war and peace, life and death. We are confronted daily with issues as stark and grave as they are unimaginable: ethnic cleansing, war crimes, genocide — dire issues that demand not only our attention but our answers. We have confronted these regularly while I have been here, in East Timor, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, the Horn of Africa, the Congo, the Middle East and elsewhere. The Council will continue to address these issues after I leave. We have addressed these issues, and also added HIV/AIDS to the agenda, as well as international terrorism. The record is not perfect and, more importantly, the record is not complete. But I think that progress has been made. Again, being an ambassador in the Security Council is not only an honour, it is a responsibility, and, occasionally a burden. But I am delighted to have shared it with all members, and their distinguished predecessors, and to have participated in

discussions in this historic Chamber where history has been written for over half a century.

In the course of the events that we dealt with, people may have occasionally been annoyed, or perhaps even offended, by my persistence on issues. But I know that they understand that, in the words of the movie *The Godfather*, it was never personal. We pushed because we believed in our issues. We compromised when we could not win. We formed coalitions which were quite unusual at times. We respect the Organization and the sovereignty of every nation here. I am touched by their friendship. But we must remember that we are not here on behalf of ourselves, or even entirely on behalf of the Governments that give us instructions. We are here to fulfil, or try to fulfil, the hopes and dreams of billions of people who look to the United Nations, as I did when I was a child, as a beacon of hope. That belief remains.

I asked my mother to come here today because she brought me to this building over 50 years ago, when it was being built, and when it was a great hope for the world's population. I hope that she feels that, while it may not have lived up to all of her and my father's dreams, it has done a good job. I think the United Nations is stronger today than it was two years ago. I think that, most importantly, the United States support for the United Nations is much stronger, as those who were generous enough to come to Washington with me 10 days ago for the hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee saw. I think that the future looks brighter for the United Nations if you persevere.

So I thank you. Your work — our work — is not finished. I leave with great hope and encouragement that you will keep it going.

Ms. Sydnes (Norway): It is a pleasure to see you, Mr. Foreign Minister, presiding over this important meeting. I would also like to join in the tribute to Ambassador Holbrooke. Norway greatly appreciates the dedication of Ambassador Holbrooke on the HIV/AIDS issue and other crucial issues. His eloquent farewell speech in this Council is a testimony to his important efforts as Ambassador to the United Nations. Of course, I wish him all the best in his future career.

AIDS is a global problem, but Africa has been hit the hardest. One year ago, AIDS was featured on the agenda of the Security Council for the first time. That represented a crucial recognition of the importance of the HIV/AIDS epidemic for peace and security, in particular in Africa. Refocusing on this issue today, we demonstrate our common commitment to address AIDS as a common security issue — a threat against humanity. As Minister of International Development, I am particularly pleased to address the Security Council on this important issue. In doing so, I commend Ambassador Holbrooke for his vision and leadership.

At the African Development Forum in Addis Ababa in December, African political leaders recommended that the HIV/AIDS pandemic be met with the same vigour and the same mobilization of human and financial resources as is the case when there is a military threat to peace and stability. We echo this urgency and applaud this commitment.

In Africa, the AIDS pandemic is more devastating than war. AIDS kills 10 times more people than conflict. In a growing number of countries, AIDS is truly a matter of national security. Through its erosion of human capital, AIDS has a serious destabilizing impact. Just imagine what a high percentage of orphaned children does to the long-term stability of a society.

AIDS destroys the social fabric of society. Social turmoil is fertile ground for conflict. Conflict breeds civil strife and war, and armed conflicts in turn accelerate the spread of AIDS. War and AIDS — together they threaten to undo decades of economic and social progress in many developing countries. We must break this vicious circle.

I would like to thank Peter Piot and Jean-Marie Guehenno for their excellent reports on the action taken on this issue by the United Nations system over the past year, in particular with regard to follow-up of Security Council resolution 1308 (2000). Norway welcomes the cooperation framework agreement signed this morning between the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on HIV/AIDS prevention and care in peacekeeping operations. Developing the capacity of peacekeepers to become advocates and actors for the awareness and prevention of HIV transmission is an important task.

We need a comprehensive strategy on how to address responsible sexual behaviour and HIV/AIDS in peacekeeping operations. Personnel should adhere to

the code of conduct for peacekeepers, but other strong preventive measures are also required.

Testing is no panacea. Still, testing can help reduce the risk of HIV transmission. We recommend that all United Nations peacekeeping personnel be offered voluntary and confidential counseling and testing, both pre- and post-deployment. This is already established practice in Norway. The counseling must be detailed, frank and adapted to local circumstances and sensitivities.

Every peacekeeping operation should have a focal point for HIV/AIDS. Resident coordinators must ensure that United Nations dispensary staff receive regular training on all aspects of HIV/AIDS prevention, overseen by designated staff members. Male and female condoms should be freely available on all United Nations premises.

The arrival of peacekeeping troops and staff may also increase the danger of sexual exploitation and sex trade. Young girls, with limited means of protecting themselves against sexual abuse and sexually transmitted diseases, are particularly vulnerable. Peacekeeping operations should contribute to the protection of the civilian population against conflict-driven human rights abuses, including sexual violence.

The point is general and should be stressed. We must focus not only on the risks associated with peacekeeping operations, but also on the positive potential of the peacekeepers. Provided they receive appropriate training, peacekeeping personnel can become important agents for change in local communities.

HIV infection rates among military personnel are often much higher than among the civilian population. This must also be kept in mind in post-conflict situations, when soldiers return to their communities. If not, we risk seeing a further acceleration in the spread of HIV/AIDS.

The World Bank-supported demobilization programmes under way in Ethiopia and Eritrea must give high priority to measures to reduce this risk. Soldiers now being demobilized must, in a sense, be remobilized for a different battle — the battle against HIV/AIDS.

Through a number of initiatives taken to ensure United Nations system-wide follow-up of resolution 1308 (2000), UNAIDS has demonstrated vigour and leadership. UNAIDS has been charged with drawing up a comprehensive plan of action on how to address HIV/AIDS in conflict situations. Norway has decided to grant 10 million Norwegian kroner — approximately $1.2 million — in support of UNAIDS' activities in this field, on top of our regular contribution to UNAIDS. The grant is part of an overall doubling of the resources we have earmarked for multilateral HIV/AIDS activities within our budget for 2001 — from approximately $7.5 million to $15 million.

We fully realize that money is not enough. We also need strong leadership and commitment. We must find new and more effective ways to work together. We must empower women and girls to make them less vulnerable. We must involve men more actively to turn the tide of the epidemic. We must promote individual responsibility, and we must build broad alliances. The Security Council — as in other matters of collective security — should help guide the way.

The battle against AIDS is part of the battle against poverty. It is a battle for education, for information, for health systems development. It is a battle for prevention, for care, for access to affordable drugs, for vaccine development. The battle must be joined on every front if we are to succeed.

A few months back, I met with Organization of African Unity (OAU) Secretary General Salim A. Salim in Addis Ababa. He described the fight against AIDS in three words: "This is war". I could not agree more.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): Just over a year ago, last January, during the United States presidency of the Security Council, the issue of HIV/AIDS was first introduced into the Council's agenda. Ambassador Holbrooke pioneered a significant and far-reaching initiative in establishing the need for discussing, in this forum, non-traditional threats to international peace and security. We are aware of the difficulties he faced initially in breaking this new ground, but his persistence and effective reasoning prevailed. During our subsequent deliberations, we realized how useful the Council debate and the action thereafter were for the international community as a whole. It is therefore fitting — as you have said, Mr. President — that we are discussing the issue of HIV/AIDS in the Council, with the participation of Ambassador Holbrooke, on his last day in office.

In Council resolution 1308 (2000), we stressed that HIV/AIDS, if unchecked, may pose a risk to stability and security. As the ramifications of HIV/AIDS extend into the very fabric of society, its long-term social and economic impact is grim. Due to its global reach, the implications for peace and security are ominous.

Africa is the most affected, but no one region or country is immune. AIDS has the potential to spread like wildfire, particularly in the developing parts of the world, if we fail to contain it in a holistic manner. HIV causes AIDS, but it is social factors, such as poverty, that are a major force behind its spread. Patterns of behaviour — fed by ignorance, misinformation and social stigmatization — have led to a disease so widespread that it has left millions of breadwinners dead and their children orphaned. It threatens to destroy the economies of highly affected countries and to wipe out a generation of young people. The developing countries are already home to 90 per cent of its victims.

We have had the opportunity to discuss the seriousness of the threat at our meetings last January and July. The special relationship between poverty and AIDS came out quite strongly. The Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Dr. Peter Piot, is present here today, for a third, very useful interaction with the Council. Before I quote his words, I would like to convey to him our appreciation for the important statement he made today. Now I quote him. "AIDS creates poverty, AIDS deepens poverty, and AIDS makes poverty harder to escape from." AIDS and poverty work together in a destabilizing, destructive alliance.

The challenge may be staggering, but humanity has not remained silent with inaction. The fight against HIV/AIDS may be difficult and prolonged, but we have not given up. Scores of leaders in the Millennium Summit referred to the terrible death and destruction that AIDS had been bringing to people, and pledged to act firmly. The scourge may be spreading, but there are examples of success where an explosive epidemic was reined in. This is encouraging.

A new report jointly issued by six United Nations agencies last December emphasises that "AIDS epidemics are not inevitable." An estimated 3 million people have died in the year 2000, but the report argues against accepting the inevitability of a worsening of the AIDS scenario. Success stories from 20 different countries, encompassing a wide variety of economic, social and geographic backgrounds, show how effective strategies can considerably reduce HIV infection rates.

We believe that a number of elements must be pursued with earnestness to spread this success around the globe.

First, the ongoing global efforts need strengthening. The special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS this June is expected to forge a new global partnership in our fight against HIV/AIDS.

Second, our approach needs to be holistic and multisectoral. AIDS is not only a health problem; its impact crosses all levels of society. Combined response involving all aspects of social, educational, welfare and economic planning is needed.

Third, new and sustained partnerships of the key stakeholders must be built. These include the public and the private sector and the communities. Fourth, the scientific community should receive full support to speed up its work to develop effective vaccines. Fifth, effective treatment should be made available to people at costs that affected societies can afford.

Finally, and most importantly, adequate resources must be made available to fight the epidemic, to develop preventive measures and to mitigate the harm already done.

We will have an opportunity to build a formidable alliance against the epidemic through our collective commitment and action in the upcoming special session of the General Assembly. Our meeting in the Council today will undoubtedly give the world a strong signal of support and show our determination in standing together against a common enemy of humanity.

In each peacekeeping resolution adopted by the Council, there is now a reference to the need to train peacekeepers in HIV/AIDS. Bangladesh, as a major troop-contributing country, has initiated practical education and awareness-raising in the training of our peacekeeping troops. In this context, Bangladesh also recognizes the wide-ranging measures taken by the United Nations Secretariat, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in particular, to effectively implement the Council's decisions. We very

much appreciate the statement made by Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno at the beginning of our meeting.

In conclusion, I pay tribute to Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, whose vision and persistence has re-energized the United Nations in its fight against one of the gravest threats that humankind faces today. The momentum he has build up in our combat against HIV/AIDS will be remembered as one of his lasting legacies during the period we have found him as our colleague and friend at the United Nations.

Today is the final day for Ambassador Holbrooke in his office as the United States representative to the United Nations. I would like to applaud him, as the representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations as well as on my own personal behalf, for the brilliant and substantive contributions he has made during his short tenure at the United Nations. His vision, his commendable initiatives and his outstanding leadership will be remembered by all of us long after he is gone, and what a remarkable farewell speech he made to us today. We will miss you, Richard.

Mr. Ben Mustapha (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): First, I would like to express my delegation's gratitude to you, Mr. President, for having convened this important meeting. I would also like to express my thanks to Mr. Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and to Mr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, for their exhaustive and enlightening statements.

One year has passed already since the first meeting of the Security Council devoted to the question of the global epidemic of HIV/AIDS. For us it was a glimmer of hope and a first concrete step towards the recognition of the importance of the threat of this disease and what it represents to human security and its devastating effects in all areas.

The Security Council subsequently adopted resolution 1308 (2000), in which it states its deep concern at the scale of the pandemic and, in particular, the seriousness of the crisis in Africa. The resolution is aimed at intensifying the battle against AIDS, and it calls on countries to develop and implement long-term strategies to push back the disease. It also stresses the importance of training and prevention among peacekeeping personnel.

The seriousness and urgency of the situation, particularly in Africa, have led the international community to make the fight against this pandemic a priority. Indeed, during the Millennium Summit, the heads of State and Government renewed their commitment to combat AIDS and, on that occasion, set themselves the goals of slowing the progress of the virus. The General Assembly decided to convene a special session to consider this question from all aspects.

My delegation notes that while important stages have been passed during the past year, we cannot but express our deep concern, given the serious developments of the situation. The new cases of infection for 2000 number 5.3 million, with 3.8 million in sub-Saharan Africa alone. This sad reality teaches us that despite all the efforts made to date, the virus continues its ravages just about everywhere in the world. We are convinced of the need for the international community to mobilize additional resources to deal with the spread of this pandemic.

It is in this spirit that we stress the importance of the commitment of all the United Nations parties to unite their efforts and to devote their energies to containing this alarming situation. International solidarity remains the only viable option in the light of the complexity of the problem and its consequent dangers. Moreover, we reaffirm our conviction that humanity as a whole should benefit from progress made in the area of medical research. We consider it unacceptable that a part of humanity should be denied the right of access to drugs.

One of the priorities of the international community is, indeed, to ensure that drugs in sufficient quantities and at accessible prices are made available to the countries of the south. We are convinced that this idea should be the foundation of any international partnership in the fight against AIDS.

Africa remains the continent most affected by this disease. It is now home to 70 per cent of adults and 80 per cent of children infected by the HIV/AIDS virus worldwide. A little more than 25 million out of the 36 million affected by the virus live in sub-Saharan Africa. This situation is becoming intolerable. It creates new conflicts, devastates entire communities and negates decades of development efforts. The effects of this disease have spared no sector of life and continue to complicate situations. It is clearer today

than ever that while waiting for a vaccine that will protect everyone from infection by HIV/AIDS, access to treatment remains a priority that all should endorse.

The role of uniformed and peacekeeping personnel in the prevention of the spread of the virus is very important. In this respect, we welcome the efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNAIDS in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1308 (2000), and we encourage them to continue their efforts.

The use of educational material in order to raise awareness among peacekeeping personnel, the training of trainers, medical training models and the holding of targeted seminars are all positive actions undertaken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in this regard.

All these actions help make uniformed personnel more responsible and prepare them to play an important role in combating the virus. However, we feel that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations can fully assume its responsibilities only if it is given adequate means for accomplishing its task. This is why we feel it is useful to strengthen the financial and human resources of that Department.

Before concluding, I wish to join you, Mr. President, and my colleagues who have spoken before me in paying a heartfelt tribute to our friend Ambassador Richard Holbrooke for having courageously introduced the question of AIDS into the Security Council agenda and for his tireless efforts in the service of the United Nations. We are grateful to him for having initiated a debate on a question that affects almost all countries, particularly those of the African continent. On this last day of his term, I say to him simply, thank you, Richard.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): You do us honour, Mr. President, by sticking with us through this week, and I thank you for chairing this important debate. I would also like to acknowledge warmly the presence of the Norwegian Minister of International Development, who is with us today.

My delegation is extremely grateful for the comprehensive, full, interesting statements that Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno and Executive Director Peter Piot made to us this morning. I shall come back to those in a moment. But I want particularly to thank Ambassador Holbrooke for bringing the HIV/AIDS debate into the Security Council a year ago. That meeting was unprecedented; some questioned its wisdom. Looking back, it was clearly the start of a process that has helped break the global silence on an immediate and widespread threat to mankind. We have made good progress since. It is a legacy, among many others, that he leaves to the Council and the United Nations. That is why I want to recognize at this, his last Council meeting, the extraordinary achievements of his 17 months.

He has not just made us think differently about the United States and its relationship with the United Nations, and made us do things in that context of which we did not think ourselves capable, but he has made us think differently about the issues themselves. What we often lack in our business at the United Nations is sheer political intensity, and he has brought us that in huge measure. I thank him for his electric input and friendship, and for his capacity through leadership, to elevate the United Nations.

There is one other tribute that I would like to pay in this context, and that is to his team at the United States Mission to the United Nations. They have been to a very special sort of charm school over the last 17 months. They have been nurse and midwife to a whole mongrel family of initiatives, pronouncements, orders, counter-orders, crises and real, solid achievements. They deserve our thanks for their role in shaping the extraordinary contribution of the United States to the United Nations and in preserving the sanity of the United Nations, no doubt at some small cost to their own.

Sweden will later make a statement on behalf of the European Union (EU) with which I align the United Kingdom. In addition to the EU effort, the United Kingdom is making significant new resources available internationally and to the United Nations to tackle the HIV/AIDS epidemic, including, most recently, $38 million to the United Nations Population Fund to help prevent a critical shortage of condoms in the developing world. We salute the similar efforts of other countries, and urge those who have not yet reviewed their contributions to do so as a matter of priority. Together we must do what we can to develop and promulgate vaccines and treatments and to make life easier for HIV/AIDS victims. But preventing new infection is of the highest importance in slowing the spread of HIV/AIDS and limiting its human and developmental costs.

The massive and rapid spread of HIV/AIDS is not just a health issue. It is a human development issue, an equity and equality issue and a significant threat to international peace and security. It therefore needs the coordinated response of United Nations bodies, including the Security Council. HIV/AIDS reverses development gains by destroying family structures, preventing adults from earning and leaving children exposed and vulnerable. In reversing development gains and creating environments in which political and ethnic tensions can worsen, HIV/AIDS can contribute to the proliferation of armed conflict. And, conversely, it becomes increasingly clear that security conditions have a direct impact on the spread of HIV/AIDS and that conflict and civil unrest can increase vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, particularly among women and children. Nowhere are the consequences more widespread or more devastating than in Africa, where 21 million people live with HIV/AIDS every day and where four fifths of all HIV/AIDS deaths have occurred.

The very scale of the HIV/AIDS problem requires an effective, efficient international response. But more than that, it requires a coherent response. We have all been involved in the United Nations system's effort to bring together economic, social, political and military actors to present a more coordinated and coherent approach to conflict. As a cause and consequence of conflict, and as a human and developmental tragedy, HIV/AIDS needs and deserves a similar effort.

In this context, the United Kingdom commends the work of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) in providing a framework for cooperation and leadership of the United Nations response to HIV/AIDS. Peter Piot has done a really excellent job over the past year in following up Security Council resolution 1308 (2000), and I welcome his report this morning. We support UNAIDS development of a United Nations system strategic plan.

In resolution 1308 (2000), on the importance of HIV awareness among peacekeepers, the Security Council showed that it was ready to engage in a joined-up approach to HIV/AIDS. It is clearly right that we concern ourselves with the welfare of deployed troops and with the civilian populations whose vulnerability to the risk of infection can increase significantly during conflict and instability. We welcome that resolution and its follow-up resolution, resolution 1325 (2000), on the importance of HIV/AIDS awareness training for military and civilian police personnel and peacekeeping personnel, which is essential, too, for the protection of women affected by armed conflict.

The United Kingdom is pleased to be working with UNAIDS to develop practical proposals for United Nations peacekeeping forces and other uniformed services. We warmly welcome, too, the focus that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is bringing to the problem, which Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno set out so clearly this morning. The cooperation framework agreement between UNAIDS and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is a significant step, and we congratulate both teams on taking it, as well as on setting up a senior expert panel on HIV testing for peacekeepers.

A year on from Ambassador Holbrooke's initiative, we have come some way, but we have a long way left to go. The year 2001 is an important year in global efforts to tackle the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Outside this Council, the General Assembly special session on HIV/AIDS in June offers an opportunity to focus international attention on the need for yet greater efforts and yet more political and financial commitment to tackling the epidemic. It is vitally important that the General Assembly special session result in increased and accelerated country-level action to tackle HIV/AIDS across all sectors, paying particular attention to prevention and to a coordinated and coherent international response. It is also vitally important that our work here in the Council, in the funds and programmes, in the Economic and Social Council and in the specialized agencies contribute positively and effectively to that process. Let us decide together, today in the Council, to mainstream HIV/AIDS in all our relevant work on international peace and security, especially in Africa, and to insist on positive results.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): One year ago, under the presidency of the United States of America, the Security Council took an unprecedented step by recognizing the threat that the HIV/AIDS pandemic poses to the peace and security of Africa, creating as it does a serious development crisis that threatens the future growth and prosperity of the affected countries, and wiping out decades of hard-won social and economic gains.

In July 2000, the Council went further, with the adoption of a groundbreaking resolution. Resolution 1308 (2000) focused on the potentially damaging

impact of HIV/AIDS on the health of international peacekeeping personnel, including support personnel, and the steps needed to protect them. It also recognized the importance of a coordinated international response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and that the pandemic is exacerbated by conditions of violence and instability, which increase the risk of exposure to the disease as a result of large movements of people, widespread uncertainty over conditions and reduced access to medical care. The resolution also expressed keen interest in additional discussions among relevant United Nations bodies, Member States, industry and other relevant institutions in order to make progress, inter alia, on the question of access to treatment and care and on prevention.

It is against this background that the Jamaican delegation expresses its appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, and the Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Dr. Peter Piot, for their comprehensive reports on the action taken since last July. In their remarks they demonstrated the partnership required to make into agents of change the men and women who serve the cause of peace across the globe in hostile and conflict situations.

We know that in situations of conflict, HIV/AIDS spreads indiscriminately to women, children, humanitarian workers, peacekeepers, soldiers and rebels alike. The cycle of the pandemic can be broken only if the world community acts in unison.

Dr. Piot has reminded us that no region of the world is immune to the impact of HIV/AIDS. As it continues to take its deadly toll, AIDS has adverse impacts on the social fabric of all societies. It destroys the productive capacity of the people, significantly reducing life expectancy. This in turn exacerbates poverty and marginalizes and orphans children, further adding to the pool of recruits, fuelling violence and even armed conflict.

In this context, let me thank the Government of Norway for the financial support announced in the Council today by the Minister of International Development for the comprehensive plan of action to be drawn up by UNAIDS on how to address HIV/AIDS in conflict situations.

In response to the potentially devastating effects of the epidemic, Caribbean heads of Government have taken several steps to develop appropriate mechanisms to respond to the crisis. A number of regional meetings have been held, and collaborative multisectoral efforts have been made in cooperation with UNAIDS. I wish to take this opportunity to express on behalf of the heads of Government appreciation to Dr. Piot and UNAIDS for the assistance we have received.

These efforts have been premised on the strongly held view that the question of HIV/AIDS can appropriately be addressed only in an integrated framework and in a holistic and comprehensive manner. It is in this sense that the efforts of the Security Council must serve as a complement to the activities of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, United Nations funds and programmes, the specialized agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions.

The evidence suggests that the international community has intensified its efforts to curb the spread of this pandemic. The attention given to HIV/AIDS by the Security Council has, as Dr. Piot said, served to increase the issue's profile on the international agenda and can serve as a critical impetus for mobilizing further the international community.

Resolution 1308 (2000) has set the stage for developing clear mechanisms to address the issue of HIV/AIDS in international peacekeeping. The important role of troop-contributing countries in implementing the provisions of the resolution will determine in large part the success we achieve in protecting not only those civilians who continue to face armed conflict, but also those persons who serve in peacekeeping operations.

A few days ago, under your presidency, Sir, this Council discussed the importance of strengthening cooperation with troop-contributing countries. There can be no doubt that the issue of AIDS is one of the critical areas in which cooperation with troop-contributing countries is indispensable. Timely and constructive initiatives at all levels — including at the national and international levels and by the United Nations — will constitute our most effective responses.

In this regard, we note the activities that have already been undertaken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as outlined to us today by the Under-Secretary-General, which are intended to sensitize peacekeepers, including support personnel. We welcome the efforts of the Department of

Peacekeeping Operations to train peacekeepers in the prevention of HIV/AIDS, and we note the importance of enhancing the pre-deployment orientation exercises undertaken with the collaboration of UNAIDS. We are cognizant of the challenge that these tasks entail, and we are encouraged by the expeditious manner in which action has been taken. We must emphasize in this connection the critical role of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in ensuring the development of adequate policy guidelines on acceptable behaviour in relation to HIV/AIDS, and we note the important contribution being made by interested States.

The results achieved through the collaborative efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNAIDS remind us of the importance of increased cooperation among all relevant bodies and agencies. There can be no substitute for strong partnerships and for a global commitment to enhancing coordination and the intensification of national and international efforts.

Both the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly have made important progress on the question of AIDS. We recall that during the Millennium Summit world leaders expressed their commitment to halting and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS by the year 2015. The convening of the special session of the General Assembly in June of this year to address the problem of HIV/AIDS will allow the international community to consider the issue in a comprehensive manner, and must be seen as an opportunity to set goals and objectives for the future. We must consolidate the progress that has already been made and devise new and innovative approaches and long-term strategies. We encourage those in a position to do so to continue their assistance to developing countries in an effort to allow national Governments to implement effective programmes to combat the spread of the disease.

The International Partnership against HIV/AIDS in Africa is a welcome initiative that should be emulated in other parts of the world.

We also continue to insist that the world community must build on the experiences of and lessons learned from those countries that have successfully reduced the spread of the disease. We must remove the stigma of HIV/AIDS through public education, providing information on how the disease is transmitted and changing at-risk behaviour. We must provide public health facilities for testing, particularly for women of child-bearing age. We must aggressively seek a cure and develop vaccines while at the same time reducing the costs of medication and treatment and making them widely available. We must provide social and economic support, particularly for those orphaned by AIDS. I hope that this is an issue that will also be addressed during the special session of the General Assembly on children, in September.

Today's debate demonstrates the global partnership that is required if the world is not to lose future generations to the scourge of HIV/AIDS.

Let me, in conclusion, Mr. President, join you and the colleagues who have spoken before me in thanking Ambassador Richard Holbrooke for the leadership he has displayed and the tenacity with which he tackled this and other issues on the Council's agenda as he sought to improve relations between the United States and the United Nations. My delegation wishes him well in his future endeavours.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): France associates itself in advance with the statement to be made later in our debate on behalf of the European Union by the Ambassador of Sweden, the current President of the European Union.

On behalf of France, I would like to thank Jean-Marie Guéhenno and Dr. Piot for their statements and for their actions. France is among the delegations that recognize and welcome the progress achieved. We have also just heard about new progress made, and we express our gratitude to them for it. Everyone agrees that more progress is needed, but let us welcome what has already been achieved.

We are faced with what is probably the most serious epidemic threat to afflict humanity since the Middle Ages. Apart from its effects on the health of entire populations, that threat has also served to roll back development and to imperil the stability and security of entire countries, and even of whole regions. Despite the slow progress achieved in the areas of research and drug development, it has nevertheless been possible to thwart somewhat the advance of the epidemic, particularly in the countries of the North.

The main problem confronting us today is as follows. The tens of millions of persons ill from HIV/AIDS live mostly in the South, while the drugs currently available to save millions of lives are generally in the North. There is something morally

unacceptable in this dichotomy. It is the duty of the international community to find a response to this current situation of the sick being in the South while the medicines are in the North. How do we do that?

During the first debate on this major issue, held a year ago on the initiative of Ambassador Holbrooke, France proposed to hold an international meeting devoted to the subject of access to treatment. That meeting will bring together donors, recipients, the pharmaceutical industry and, of course, patients' groups. Its goal will be to find lasting solutions to the problem of comprehensively reaching sick persons in the developing world through concrete projects and specific partnerships designed to benefit those millions of sick people who today have absolutely nothing to help them to survive.

France believes that such an international meeting should be among the operational outcomes of the upcoming special session of the General Assembly on AIDS. The international meeting proposed by France will be held from 30 November to 1 December 2001. The second meeting of the steering committee to make preparations for the meeting will be held from 24 January at Geneva.

Allow me to thank the Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and Director-General Brundtland of the World Health Organization for their ongoing assistance in preparing for that meeting. It is my hope that this, the first year of the new millennium, will at long last be marked by a translation of our words into actions so that we can save the millions upon millions of lives that are today at stake in developing countries. France will spare no effort to pursue that goal.

I would like to introduce a point of order at this stage of our debate. You, Mr. President, have admirably found the words to express the gratitude all of us feel for Ambassador Richard Holbrooke. Those who have spoken before me have had their own words to say, all with a great deal of emotion and friendship, in expressing our gratitude to a truly exceptional ambassador.

We are here in a body that has a tradition of adopting resolutions. It seems to me that, given the importance of this event and the urgency imposed by the calendar by virtue of the fact that today is the last meeting at which our friend Richard Holbrooke will participate, I would like to ask the indulgence of the Council and of the President to propose for immediate adoption by the Council — for once putting aside the sacrosanct 24-hour rule — of a draft resolution, which I would now like to read out in English. Members of the Council have been made somewhat aware of it, and I appeal to Ambassador Holbrooke that, for once, he not use his veto power. The draft resolution reads as follows:

(*spoke in English*)

"*The Security Council*,

"*Recognizing* the exceptional contribution that Ambassador Richard Holbrooke made to the United Nations and to the improvement of relations between the United States of America and the United Nations Organization in only 17 months,

"*Emphasizing* the crucial importance of this relationship for both parties,

"*Would warmly welcome* a decision to maintain Ambassador Richard Holbrooke in his current capacity for the next four years."

(*spoke in French*)

I submit the draft resolution to our Council, and I yield the floor.

The President: Does Ambassador Holbrooke have anything to say?

Mr. Holbrooke (United States of America): You have before you further evidence of why the United States and France have such difficult bilateral relations. I am deeply touched by this, but on instructions I would have to exercise my veto.

I am deeply touched, Jean David, by your friendship and your generosity, and, of course, by all of my colleagues who have spoken thus far, and I thank you very very much.

The President: The draft resolution cannot be adopted, owing to the negative vote of a permanent member of the Council.

I understand Mr. Holbrooke would like to say a few words before I suspend the meeting.

Mr. Holbrooke (United States of America): In the event I cannot return this afternoon, I do want to express my appreciation for the remarks of all the representatives who have spoken so far — Norway,

Bangladesh, Tunisia, the United Kingdom, Jamaica and France — and I know that Colombia, Ireland, Ukraine and Mauritius are still to speak, in addition to the outside speakers.

I am deeply touched. I hope that the Under-Secretary-General and Dr. Piot will understand that my comments, while they may not agree with every aspect of them, are intended to help the situation. We are not here to worry about ourselves, but about the people who are affected.

I should like to make two comments. First, it seems to me that the public nature of this meeting and its value, in contrast to the informal private meeting, have been proven by the dramatic statements today, by the public attention they have received and by the new agreements between DPKO and UNAIDS. I hope this will usher in a new era of close cooperation. Again — I say this particularly in the presence of those not members of the Security Council — this kind of discussion should always be conducted in public, so the world knows we are concerned and so other nations can participate.

Secondly, on a personal note once more, I am deeply honoured to be part of this discussion. I am profoundly moved by the expressions of support. There is not much more to say, except to thank my friends around this table and my colleagues in the red chairs.

When I leave here at noon tomorrow, I leave the Mission in the hands of a very good team. I am particularly pleased that Secretary-designate Powell has asked Ambassador Cunningham to remain as the Deputy Permanent Representative and has already said that he wants to have a direct working relationship with Ambassador Cunningham until my successor is chosen. Everything you have said in praise of our efforts was not addressed simply to me, in my view, but to an entire team. R.P. Eddy, whom you all know, has worked tirelessly on this issue and deserves great credit. He has worked very closely with DPKO and UNAIDS and others in this room.

My entire team has all been terrific. Ambassador Soderberg will stay for a limited period, and Ambassador King has been asked to stay until a successor is named, which could be some time. We are all fortunate she will do that. I wanted to stress that even though Ambassador Levitte's resolution would be rejected by my Government I can assure him and his colleagues that the United States representation will continue to be ably led by Ambassador Cunningham.

The President: I wish to thank the representatives of France and the United States for their remarks.

There are a number of speakers remaining on my list. With the concurrence of members of the Council, I intend to suspend the meeting and to resume it at 3.30 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.10 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4259 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

4259th meeting

Friday, 19 January 2001, 3.30 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Jayakumar	(Singapore)
Members:	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Mauritius	Mr. Neewoor
	Norway	Ms. Sydnes
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchynski
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Holbrooke

Agenda

The responsibility of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security: HIV/AIDS and international peacekeeping operations.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

01-21989 (E)

The meeting was resumed at 3.40 p.m.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations for his briefing on the implementation of resolution 1308 (2000) in relation to United Nations forces. I should also like to thank Dr. Piot for his informative and exhaustive briefing on how the various United Nations organizations, in cooperation with the World Bank, have responded to the devastating effects of the AIDS epidemic at the global level.

I should also like to express, through the representative of the United States, my gratitude to Ambassador Richard Holbrooke for his active efforts in encouraging the Security Council to deal with this matter. As this is his last meeting with us in the Council, I should like to wish him great success in his future endeavours.

For my delegation it is clear the world AIDS epidemic around the world is a phenomenon that requires the greatest efforts on the part of all nations, acting individually as well as collectively.

We are encouraged by the adoption, at the most recent session of the General Assembly, of resolution 55/13, through which it was decided to convene a special session in June of this year to deal with various aspects of this problem, including those linked to the peace and security of nations. We hope that the Assembly will continue to be the appropriate forum for dealing with this topic, in order to ensure that it receives the consideration it deserves from all of the States Members of the United Nations.

The global problem of AIDS is a daunting challenge for the authorities of many of our countries in the areas of public health, economic development and national security. Of all that has been said and written on this topic, my delegation is clear, at least, on the following aspects.

AIDS, having claimed 20 million lives so far, represents the greatest global epidemic the world has known since the appearance of the bubonic plague in Europe six centuries ago. Of the 36 million people who live with the disease today, two thirds of them live in sub-Saharan Africa, where 8 million of them are orphaned children.

The best strategy to fight the epidemic consists of national programmes aimed at preventing the spread of the disease, alleviating its effects on its victims, and access to low-cost medications, including a vaccine.

AIDS also poses a threat to economic development. A World Bank study estimates that thus far we have seen only 10 per cent of the potential manifestations of this disease and 10 per cent of the number of deaths. People with AIDS in developing countries will not have access to a vaccine or to low-cost medication for another 10 years. Indicators relating to productivity, family income and the training of human resources will also be broadly affected by this epidemic.

As a result, this situation requires political leadership on the part of Governments, action by the affected communities and a responsible attitude on the part of international pharmaceutical companies.

As concerns the impact of AIDS on peace and security, the Council clearly pointed in resolution 1308 (2000) of July last that an out-of-control epidemic could threaten the stability and security of countries, and adopted a series of measures within the scope of its jurisdiction.

Let us imagine an extreme and complex scenario resulting from the effects of AIDS. A town that is overwhelmed by the incidence of this disease and facing the collapse of its public health system decides to seek the assistance of the health authorities of a neighbouring country instead of passively awaiting its gradual destruction. Thus the humanitarian emergency is transferred to the neighbour, generating resistance among the local population, and there we have the beginning of a new conflict.

We realize, nevertheless, that this is an extreme scenario. What we are seeing today is that wars and armed conflicts help to spread the epidemic. Where there are armies on the march, camps overflowing with refugees and women who are sexually assaulted, the probability of spreading the disease increases.

In this respect, studies by non-governmental organizations carried out before and after the Rwanda genocide are revealing. The average rate of infection among refugees increased sixfold while they were in the camps.

The Council, acting within its jurisdiction, has repeatedly urged countries that provide troops to

peacekeeping operations to provide the necessary education and assistance to troops in the field. We are encouraged by what is being done by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and what it will continue to do to strengthen such preventive actions.

My delegation is committed to the action begun by the Council and is in favour of continuing to consider at future meetings the potential repercussions of the AIDS phenomenon on various areas of international peace and security.

Mr. Ryan (Ireland): As noted earlier by my European Union colleagues Ambassadors Greenstock and Levitte, Sweden will speak a little later on behalf of the European Union. I wish to associate Ireland fully with the statement of the Swedish European Union presidency in advance. We would like to make the following points in our national capacity.

We welcome today's debate on HIV/AIDS, and we recognize the efforts of the United States and of Ambassador Richard Holbrooke in helping to inscribe this critical issue on the agenda of the Security Council. We commend the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) for the cooperation framework just presented, which is an important follow-up to resolution 1308 (2000).

The analyses and the detailed action programmes which we heard earlier from Jean-Marie Guéhenno and Peter Piot reflect very clear, unblinking responses by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNAIDS. I commend their frankness and the practicable character of their proposals, as well as the evident intensive cooperation between their departments.

The intensified cooperation envisaged at the Headquarters and field levels, encompassing military and civilian peacekeepers as well as humanitarian workers and vulnerable populations, will constitute a very important further step in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. We particularly welcome the proposal for extensive training for peacekeepers before, during and after their participation in missions, which has already been identified by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations as one of the key factors in this area. We encourage Member States to support the efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in this regard.

I should like also to echo and to underline the important point made earlier by Jean-Marie Guéhenno that we need to move quickly to fully staff the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and, during the comprehensive review, to look at the staffing needs related to the crucial issues he covered today.

The Council has recognized that, in large areas of the world, HIV/AIDS poses a threat to international peace and security. Where this threat is most conspicuous, the Governments and peoples concerned are faced already with the huge challenges of forging national and regional development. Ireland is firmly convinced that in building international peace and security, the international community must recognize that no peace can be whole or secure if it is not underpinned by a sustainable process of economic and social development. Many different challenges flow from this assertion. Effective combat against, and reversal of, HIV/AIDS is one of them.

The problem of HIV/AIDS is an extremely complex one. It is abundantly clear that the success of the struggle against HIV/AIDS in developing countries depends on the implementation of policies and programmes that deal with the fundamental problems of global poverty and inequity. I would like to make some comments on what Ireland sees as the major challenges in combating this pandemic.

On a global scale, the impact of HIV on international development is similar to the impact of the HIV virus on human immunity; it is progressively weakening the fabric of societies and increasing their vulnerability to conflict and poverty. Though there is now genuine commitment on the part of many leaders to fighting the disease, it is a hard reality that the countries most affected by HIV/AIDS are those least able to afford the mobilization of a sustained, effective response.

There is no single other issue that presents such an enormous challenge to the attainment of the international development goals than HIV/AIDS. We know that low levels of development are associated with poverty, illiteracy, poor access to health services, gender inequality, economic migration and political instability. We know that these are the same factors that have greatly facilitated the spread of HIV in poorer countries. We know also that the existence of high rates of HIV/AIDS in communities leads to a reversal of development progress. In short, HIV/AIDS is both a

cause and a result of high levels of poverty and underdevelopment. The fight against HIV/AIDS will never be won unless it is situated within a comprehensive response which effectively addresses global poverty and disadvantage.

Despite the very considerable efforts to stop the halt of HIV/AIDS over the past decade, the number of people infected with the virus, particularly in countries where there are high rates of poverty and instability, continues to grow. Twenty years into this pandemic the international community is more aware of which interventions have succeeded in curtailing the spread of HIV and which have not. More than this, there is now a much greater understanding of which approaches to development aid have been found to be effective and which are inappropriate or are no longer valid. One clear message has been learned, however, and that is that complex development problems are not amenable to quick-fix, vertical-type interventions.

There is a very real sense that HIV/AIDS has transformed the development agenda. The global spread of HIV/AIDS has highlighted the inadequacies and failures of the international development effort to date. Ireland believes that there is no single issue that provides a more compelling reason for strengthening our commitment, including the financial commitment of the donor community, to international development cooperation than the global HIV/AIDS crisis.

Ireland has developed a specific HIV/AIDS strategy for our national programme of development cooperation. HIV/AIDS is now a core issue cutting right across all development programmes supported by the Irish Government. The commitment by our Government to reaching the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of GNP to be spent on official development assistance (ODA) by the year 2007 provides us with an opportunity to advocate and to provide substantial additional financial support to address this huge global challenge.

There is a need for the international community to assist poorer countries in providing care and support for people infected with the HIV virus. In particular, we must redouble our efforts in conjunction with the relevant United Nations bodies, in addition to DPKO and UNAIDS, industry and other relevant organizations, to address the complex issues of access to medicines in developing countries and overcoming the obstacles in that regard. We need clarity about issues such as tiered pricing, compulsory licensing, parallel imports and the rights and obligations of both patent holders and signatories to international patent protection agreements.

We hope that all of these issues will be addressed in the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS next June. We welcome the proposal that one of the round tables scheduled as part of the special session should include a discussion on HIV/AIDS as a security issue. We look forward to participating in the preparatory process and in the special session itself, which, hopefully, will secure a full global commitment to fight the pandemic.

I heard, and share fully, Richard Holbrooke's conviction that resolution 1308 (2000) should become one of those watershed resolutions in the history of the United Nations thus far.

Prime Minister Meles of Ethiopia, in his address to the HIV/AIDS meeting organized by the African Development Forum in Addis Ababa last month, stated that "the struggle against HIV/AIDS is a struggle for the future of the African continent". Our presence here today demonstrates a very clear affirmation of Mr. Meles' statement and recognizes also that HIV/AIDS is a major development crisis not just for Africa but for the global community. We also recognize that the only solution will be a global one involving sustained coordination and cooperation by us all.

Finally, I join other speakers in bidding *au revoir* soon to our colleague, New Yorker and man of the world, Richard Holbrooke. I would be grateful if his colleagues could convey this message to him.

Mr. Kuchynski (Ukraine): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for presiding over today's meeting on the question of particular importance for the entire United Nations membership, and for my delegation in particular. I want also to welcome the Minister of International Development of Norway, who spoke today. I would like to join other speakers in expressing our appreciation for the briefings by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno and Dr. Peter Piot and for their information on the implementation of the Security Council resolution 1308 (2000) and on the steps undertaken within the framework of the United Nations system and worldwide to address the problem of HIV/AIDS.

We regard this meeting as an important review stage in the ongoing work in the United Nations in this

field. A year has passed since the Security Council held its first open discussion on the issue of HIV/AIDS. Now there is a need to assess how much has been done and how effectively the bodies and agencies of the United Nations system have worked in carrying out the tasks entrusted to them.

Today, one can hardly dispute the fact that the problem of AIDS has become one of the key issues on the agenda of the United Nations, as well as of the work of many other international and regional organizations. The representatives of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) have provided us with detailed information regarding these developments and the efforts that are being undertaken within their respective agencies.

I want to join my colleagues in paying tribute to Ambassador Holbrooke, specifically for his outstanding role and his tremendous efforts in promoting the effective consideration of the issue of HIV/AIDS in the United Nations and in the Security Council. Undoubtedly, the issue of HIV/AIDS on the Council's agenda will remain as one of the most important accomplishments in Ambassador's Holbrooke rich United Nations diplomatic heritage. We are thankful to him and wish him every success in his future endeavours.

On the whole, we consider that the past year was rather productive and demonstrated significant progress in tackling the problem of HIV/AIDS. I wish, in this connection, to address such an important aspect as coordination within the United Nations. We have heard quite often the criticism regarding the absence of effective coordination between various bodies of the United Nations system — in particular DPKO and UNAIDS, field missions and Headquarters — and we should recognize that a substantial part of that criticism was justified. Still, we see that the situation in this area is improving.

Today's signing, as we have just heard from Dr. Peter Piot, of a cooperation framework agreement between UNAIDS and DPKO is, of course, a welcome development. We hope that the adequate implementation of this document will also strengthen the effective realization of Security Council resolution 1308 (2000) and improve the capacity of peacekeepers to become advocates of and actors for the awareness and prevention of HIV transmission. I cannot but agree that it is incumbent on the United Nations to set the highest possible standards for the conduct of troops deployed under its flag, and we welcome further efforts by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNAIDS in fulfilling this task.

At the same time, it should be pointed out that awareness-raising and prevention of HIV/AIDS is not only the task of these two bodies. All other sectors and United Nations bodies dealing with the problem should be involved in this work. My delegation is convinced that the key role and responsibility for coordinating these efforts lies within the General Assembly. The delegation of Ukraine made every effort to advance the idea of convening a special session on the problem of AIDS, which is expected to elaborate a comprehensive agenda for mutual action against the pandemic and to become a coordinator of further efforts of the United Nations and the world community in this direction.

I would also like to commend the work done by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations during the past six months in implementing resolution 1308 (2000). Taking into account the significant constraints, including the absence of adequate resources and staffing, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has managed to accomplish most of what could be realistically expected of it. We are grateful for that, and we hope that its work in this field will continue to improve.

The success of our undertaking should be measured by the results achieved. Unfortunately, as we have just been informed by Dr. Peter Piot, despite all the efforts made, the HIV pandemic continues to advance. During the past year alone over 5 million people were infected with HIV worldwide and 3 million people died of AIDS — more annual deaths than ever before. These facts confirm that the scourge of HIV/AIDS will continue to be a serious challenge for humankind for many years to come. The results of the work, which is being undertaken on a large scale, will not be seen immediately. That is why it is critically important to accelerate the coordinated efforts of the international community in fighting the disease. Let me echo what has been said by a number of speakers before me: we need real commitments to accomplish what we are aiming at, and only when those commitments become a reality will we be able to respond adequately to this epidemic.

Mr. Neewoor (Mauritius): We thank you, honourable Minister, for presiding over this important meeting today. We also welcome the Minister of International Development of Norway and thank her for her participation in the discussion today.

We wish to thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Dr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) for their important briefings this morning.

The open meeting of the Security Council today on the theme "The responsibility of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security: HIV/AIDS and international peacekeeping operations" is a timely event, in our view, for two distinct reasons. First, the AIDS pandemic continues to take a heavy toll of human lives daily across the world, leaving in its wake destitution and despair in millions of homes. The HIV/AIDS tragedy has afflicted the African continent more severely than anywhere else. Communities have been wiped out wholesale; valuable human resources so essential for the social and economic development of nations have fallen victim, leaving behind voids not easy to fill. I can only reiterate what has been said on so many occasions before — that African Governments need a much larger measure of international support and assistance as they grapple relentlessly with the deadly AIDS pandemic with their limited resources.

In July last year the Security Council adopted resolution 1308 (2000), in which the impact of HIV/AIDS on societies and nations was brought into focus, and several measures have been recommended to be taken by relevant United Nations agencies and at national levels aimed at containing the pandemic. It also addresses the risk factor for men and women deployed in United Nations peacekeeping operations. We commend all the efforts undertaken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in creating awareness among its personnel on the seriousness of the issue. However, these efforts need to be further intensified, as well as complemented by the initiatives of the troop-contributing countries to better prepare their troops by training them in and informing them on the preventive measures necessary in the field.

More importantly, the resolution recognizes for the first time that HIV/AIDS has impacts on the stability and security of nations and societies. The work carried out by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Medical Support Unit in tandem has been most encouraging not only from a training point of view, but as a joint effort to act as a facilitator in testing and counselling individuals affected by the virus. Obviously, we know that there remains a great deal to do, as mentioned both by Mr. Guéhenno and Dr. Piot today.

The second reason why we regard today's open meeting of the Security Council, devoted to the AIDS issue, as timely is that it is an opportunity for us to express our appreciation and thanks to Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, on this day when he completes his tenure as Permanent Representative, not only for his initiative of placing the HIV/AIDS question on the Security Council agenda for the first time in January 2000, during the United States Council presidency, but also for the impetus he provided, under which President Clinton, Vice-President Al Gore and the United States Congress came forward to commit substantial new funds to help fight HIV/AIDS. In this regard, we recall particularly the order signed by President Clinton last year to encourage the United States pharmaceutical industry to bring down the costs of medicine for treatment of HIV/AIDS sold in Africa.

Ambassador Holbrooke undoubtedly has made a significant contribution to raising awareness about HIV/AIDS through his action at the United Nations. We thank him warmly as we wish him well in his future endeavours. We thank him, finally, for having been a good friend of Africa and my country during his tenure and for his very frank and candid statement in this Chamber this morning, covering a host of very important issues of concern to the international community.

Fortunately, there are drugs today that help in the treatment of HIV/AIDS, and the use of such drugs has already brought about a marked decline in the incidence of AIDS in the industrialized nations. The initiative President Clinton has taken to help bring down the costs of drugs in Africa for HIV/AIDS treatment may not necessarily make the drugs cheap enough and affordable for all in the near future, but it is an important step in that direction. Similar initiatives need to be taken to cover all developing nations and, more importantly, to ensure access by all HIV victims to life-saving medication at reasonable costs. We also believe that international financial institutions that have the resources at their disposal need to do a lot

more, in concert with the United Nations system, in the global battle against HIV/AIDS.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Canada. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Heinbecker (Canada) (*spoke in French*): Canada is pleased that the Security Council is once again addressing the important issue of HIV/AIDS. We are grateful for the briefings provided by Dr. Piot and Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno on the ongoing efforts across the United Nations system and on the efforts, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1308 (2000), within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, to deal with the tragedy of AIDS.

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Guéhenno and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for the efforts they have made, with resources that remain too limited, to enhance training for Blue Helmets, both in general and regarding HIV/AIDS prevention in particular. We also wish to encourage them to go further in their endeavours.

(*spoke in English*)

In last year's Council consultations on resolution 1308 (2000), led by Ambassador Holbrooke, Canada particularly welcomed the early engagement of troop contributors in the process, because HIV/AIDS in the context of peacekeeping is a matter that affects them directly. At that time we recommended that this process be a model for future Security Council consultations, and underscored our belief that the views of troop contributors should be given particular weight on issues such as HIV/AIDS.

We would therefore like to suggest now, in line with the important open debate on strengthening cooperation with troop contributors, held earlier this week, that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNAIDS meet soon with troop contributors to assess the progress made in undertaking the requirements of resolution 1308 (2000).

At the same time, let us take care not to demonize peacekeepers. Every aspect of HIV/AIDS is important and needs to be addressed effectively, but I trust that no one here believes that peacekeepers are at the heart of this problem. HIV/AIDS is, nonetheless, as Ambassador Holbrooke so well demonstrated in his remarks this morning, a very serious security challenge.

During our recently ended tenure on the Council, Canada consistently argued that the Council must broaden its definition of security to include non-traditional threats, particularly those that affect human security. As we stated exactly a year ago in this Chamber, there is no question that the HIV/AIDS pandemic has reached proportions that pose a clear threat to stability and development.

Like others, we wish to express our appreciation for the work of Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, who brought such commitment, determination and humanitarian energy to this crucial issue.

No region of the world is unaffected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, nor can any region be complacent. This morning Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and Executive Director Piot discussed the truly shocking statistics on this issue. Those numbers are seared into the minds of everyone in this Chamber. They tell of devastation with long-term consequences potentially the equal of conflict and war; indeed, left unattended, these consequences can lead to State failure.

There are fortunately, however, some bright spots with regard to the international community's response to HIV/AIDS. We would be remiss if we did not recognize efforts made by many countries to address this issue through the adoption of comprehensive national strategies, integrating prevention, treatment, support and human rights, and aimed at all segments of society.

No country is spared this problem. In Canada, we are currently implementing our own national strategy, and we urge all countries that may not have done so to put into place their own strategies. While there is clearly an important role for the international community to play in assisting this process, it cannot succeed in the absence of national efforts.

But the international community does have a major responsibility. For this reason, Canada is quadrupling its spending for international efforts in the fight against HIV/AIDS, for a total investment of approximately $270 million Canadian dollars, which is about US$ 170 million, over the next five years. This increase in funding underlines our recognition of the

magnitude of the crisis and our determination to do our share.

Beyond additional funding by the international community is the fact that there has been a turning point in the fight against HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS is now firmly on the international political agenda. And the first step in solving a problem is acknowledging that one has one. Thanks to Ambassador Holbrooke's work, the Security Council has taken that step.

We look forward to concrete results being achieved this summer at the June special session on HIV/AIDS. The AIDS pandemic poses a fundamental challenge to human security and, above all, to our humanity. It is a challenge that we can and must meet.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Sweden. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Norström (Sweden): Thank you for the opportunity to address the Council today.

First of all, since Ambassador Holbrooke is not here, I would like to ask the American delegation to convey to him the European Union's warm thanks for his contributions in putting the HIV/AIDS issue high on our agenda, as well as for his dedication and efforts in highlighting the problems of Africa and for all the other issues he has put his heart into. We wish Ambassador Holbrooke the best of luck in all of his future endeavours.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area — Iceland and Liechtenstein — align themselves with this statement.

The European Union is very pleased to participate in this meeting today on the subject of HIV/AIDS and the follow-up to resolution 1308 (2000), and welcomes in particular the efforts by the United States and by Ambassador Holbrooke personally.

We participated in the Security Council debate led by the Vice-President of the United States, Mr. Al Gore, a year ago. We also supported resolution 1308 (2000), which was adopted by the Council in July last year. The Council is today once more sending a strong message that HIV/AIDS is a global crisis that, if unchecked, may threaten international peace and human security. The European Union fully endorses this message. The Union also recognizes the evolution of the HIV/AIDS epidemic from a health crisis to a severe development crisis and a potential security risk.

Attempting to describe the long-term effects of the HIV/AIDS crisis is beyond the scope of a statement like the one I am making today. The epidemic causes tremendous human suffering, especially in those developing countries that lack sufficient resources for treatment, care and support. HIV/AIDS is also destabilising entire societies through systemic damage, threatening development itself.

The spread of HIV/AIDS is alarming. The latest update published by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), in December last year, states that in the year 2000, 5.3 million people were infected with HIV. The number of people living with HIV/AIDS in the world today is 36.1 million. These numbers are 50 per cent higher than the predictions made by the World Health Organization in 1991. However, we must recall that it is possible to do something to stop the spread. The critical situation is an urgent call to implement the plans of actions regarding HIV/AIDS that already exist.

The European Union recognizes that there is a vicious circle involving AIDS, poverty and armed conflict. Movements of people resulting from conflict fuel the spread of HIV/AIDS, but the epidemic itself also causes social and economic crises that can threaten stability and security. The Security Council clearly has a role here. Fighting the spread of HIV/AIDS is directly linked to preventing armed conflict.

Resolution 1308 (2000) addresses peacekeepers' health and the danger of spreading the disease, but also their advocacy role as promoters of responsible behaviour. The European Union is convinced that peacekeepers can contribute to the work of prevention. Furthermore, we welcome the ongoing discussions in the United Nations system on the ways in which conflict and humanitarian situations sometimes bring about an elevated risk of HIV transmission for refugees and host communities, as well as for the personnel of

the United Nations and non-governmental organizations.

National Governments carry the prime responsibility to make sure that peacekeepers are adequately trained and educated. Moreover, the European Union considers national strategies as crucial to coping with HIV/AIDS and encourages the development of long-term national strategies. Those national strategies should include education, prevention, voluntary and confidential testing, and counselling. Increased cooperation among Member States is imperative. The United Nations should support the creation of national HIV/AIDS programmes wherever such are not already in place.

The European Union strongly supports the coordinating work of UNAIDS and urges all United Nations bodies to cooperate fully and at all levels with UNAIDS. The entire United Nations system must act on a global scale and in a holistic manner.

The European Union commends UNAIDS and Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) for their efforts in the area of HIV/AIDS and peacekeeping. The cooperation framework presented to the Council today is an important step forward and constitutes a clear result of resolution 1308 (2000). Intensified coordination in the area of HIV/AIDS at both Headquarters and the field mission level is of utmost importance to fighting the epidemic and reducing its spread. The international community bears a responsibility to fight this epidemic that knows no borders.

The European Union notes with satisfaction the broad approach taken by UNAIDS and DPKO by addressing military and civilian peacekeeping personnel as well as humanitarian workers and vulnerable populations. We also welcome the wide range of areas of cooperation and the emphasis on a multisectoral approach in the proposed framework.

The European Union wishes to express its firm commitment to the preparation for and holding of the General Assembly special session on HIV/AIDS this June. The special session will provide an excellent opportunity to talk frankly and in depth about HIV/AIDS in a broad perspective, notably together with representatives of civil society. We are pleased to have on the agenda such issues as prevention and care, the long-term consequences of the epidemic, the situation of individuals and how the international community should move forward.

It has been proposed that one of the round tables to take place during the special session should be devoted to a discussion of HIV/AIDS as a security issue. Today's important debate, as well as earlier work done by the Security Council on this topic, will provide an essential input for our deliberations in June.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Costa Rica. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Niehaus (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me, first of all, to congratulate you, Mr. President, and, through you Singapore, for your well-deserved election to the Security Council. We are convinced that your country will faithfully represent in this body the interests of the smallest members of the international community.

I would also like to congratulate the representatives of Ireland, Colombia, Norway and Mauritius on their joining the Council. It is now for them to be standard bearers for the interests and will of the other members of the Organization so as to make this body a more effective, democratic and legitimate organ.

I would also like to thank the Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Dr. Peter Piot, for the briefing he made at the beginning of the meeting.

The AIDS epidemic has become a catastrophe of vast proportions. As we have heard, today over 36 million people live with the HIV virus, while over 3 million persons died of AIDS in the year 2000. The crisis is most acute in sub-Saharan Africa. Over 25.3 million people in Africa carry the HIV virus, in a continent which is home to 70 per cent of the world's adult HIV infections and 80 per cent of child infections. Africa is also home to the majority of both children made orphans and older persons made destitute by the disease.

Although the human and social effects of AIDS in Africa are incalculable, the economic effects are, on the other hand, horribly clear. The epidemic will dramatically reduce the annual economic growth of sub-Saharan countries, and it is estimated that by 2010 those losses will exceed $22 billion.

We also cannot forget the more than 2 million persons who suffer from this infection in Latin America and the Caribbean. My continent has also been a victim of the devastating effects of the epidemic, on both the personal and the social levels.

Controlling this disease requires firm and clear measures. High-risk behaviours should be avoided at all costs. Although in some extreme cases measures such as distributing hypodermic needles and condoms can be taken to reduce the level of risk, those measures are not enough; they inevitably entail a margin of error and their success is dependant on careful and continuous use. Reducing risk is not enough; it must be eliminated.

A long-term AIDS prevention strategy must promote the widespread adoption of safe practices. We must promote social standards and values that encourage responsible behaviour and the rejection of the use of intravenous drugs as well as of casual and risky sexual relations.

A comprehensive strategy to deal with the scourge of AIDS requires, in addition to the adoption of health programmes to provide medical and psychological assistance to the sick and those who are infected, as well as programmes to meet the basic needs of vulnerable orphans and elderly people. The human aspect of the crisis is enormous, and requires extensive political and financial investment in programmes designed to assist the neediest populations. At the same time, we must guarantee that the best medicines are readily accessible to the ill in developing countries.

Considering the problem of AIDS in relation to United Nations peacekeeping personnel, the Security Council is faced with a worrisome problem. Could it be that some United Nations personnel are carriers of the HIV virus and thus, through their behaviour, endanger the health of civilians in the field? That would be unacceptable. Could it be that United Nations personnel are at risk of contracting the HIV virus by engaging in risky practices with the civilian population? That situation would be equally unacceptable. My delegation trusts that such situations will not arise.

The behaviour of United Nations personnel should always be beyond reproach. We cannot allow United Nations personnel to have casual relations with the local population, putting civilians and themselves at risk of infection. We trust that the troop-contributing countries, as well as the Secretariat, will take the appropriate disciplinary and health measures to prevent such situations from occurring.

Because of the judicious division of powers and functions that the founders of the United Nations incorporated into the Charter, the Security Council's competency in the area of AIDS and the HIV virus is severely limited. It is for the General Assembly to study and coordinate, in a comprehensive manner, efforts to combat this epidemic. It is for the Economic and Social Council to assess and deal with the social and developmental effects of the disease. That is why my delegation is looking with keen interest to the special session of the General Assembly on AIDS, which will be held in June this year. We trust that that meeting will provide a new impetus to the fight against this disease.

Finally, I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Richard Holbrooke and wish him every success. I can assure him that his innovative approach, character and special style will not be forgotten in this Chamber.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Nigeria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mbanefo (Nigeria): As we bid farewell to our colleague Ambassador Holbrooke, it is only fitting to recognize that under his visionary and informed leadership, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, hitherto seen as a social and health issue, was for the first time considered by the Security Council as constituting an international security problem.

It will be recalled that in January 2000 the Security Council convened a meeting, under the agenda item "The situation in Africa", on the impact of AIDS on security, over which Vice-President Al Gore of the United States of America presided. That momentous occasion — the first of its kind in the Security Council — attracted a broad spectrum of stakeholders concerned with the HIV pandemic, which has become not only a developmental problem, but also an international security issue. This was followed by a meeting, held in the Council in July, on the impact of HIV/AIDS on international peace and security. Resolution 1308 (2000), adopted by the Council at that meeting, brought attention to the devastating effect of the HIV pandemic and its threat to peace and security,

particularly its effect on United Nations peacekeeping operations.

One year later, a number of activities have taken place at the national, regional and international levels, aimed at bringing the international community together to develop coherent and concerted plans and strategies aimed at controlling the scourge. One such forum is the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, scheduled to take place in June 2001.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic constitutes the most immediate challenge to humanity and to the security and stability of our world. Today, HIV/AIDS is the fourth leading cause of death worldwide, with the toll rising every day. A total of 21.8 million people around the world are believed to have died of AIDS, 4.3 million of them children. According to figures from the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organization (WHO), 36.1 million people are now living with the HIV virus, while 5.3 million were infected with the disease last year. The figure is estimated to reach 40 million before the end of the decade. Among those infected have been soldiers and civilian personnel who participated in various United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Beyond the human suffering and misery caused by the pandemic, it is now widely acknowledged that HIV/AIDS has evolved into a developmental problem. Governments in developing countries, struggling with a lingering external debt problem, are forced to allocate a disproportionate part of their meagre resources to the health sector. Yet the disease strikes the most productive age groups — from 15 to 49 years old — thus causing massive losses in production and, indeed, disruption in vital sectors of the economy. The challenge before us, therefore, is how to strengthen the capacities of developing countries, which are the hardest hit, by providing adequate resources to translate the quantum of existing political will into action for the eradication of the disease. That we must do urgently.

It is very important, in the discourse on the global impact of HIV/AIDS in different regions of the world, to recognize that the African continent continues to experience the most devastating effects of the disease. According to a United Nations report, some 16.4 million Africans have already died from the disease, while another 25.3 million are now living with the HIV virus. The pandemic poses an unprecedented threat to the region's development. Its hard-won developmental progress is therefore under real threat of reversal as a result of the scourge.

In Nigeria, preparations for the African summit on HIV/AIDS are at an advanced stage. This week, a consensus workshop aimed at the development of a Nigerian national vaccine strategy took place, addressed by a cross-section of stakeholders. Nigeria is the first country with a very large population to cross the 5 per cent prevalence rate, which is the threshold of an explosive epidemic. This frightening figure has made it imperative for Nigeria to explore all possible means to prevent the further spread of the virus. My President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, has declared personal leadership of the campaign against HIV/AIDS in Nigeria, and policies have been reviewed to ensure a favourable environment for AIDS control. The Government has also allocated additional funds to the national AIDS programme, and intensive media campaigns continue throughout the country. Local and international non-governmental organizations are also very active in the campaign against HIV/AIDS.

The frontiers of previous efforts at the regional level were further expanded through the bold initiative taken at the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Summit in Lomé last July. In spite of the lack of resources, African leaders at that Summit demonstrated a firm commitment to confront the pandemic. At the continental level, programmes have been put in place to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS through advocacy, education and prevention. African leaders adopted the Lomé Declaration on HIV/AIDS, which was an expression of Africa's commitment, at the highest political level, to rid the continent of the disease. We strongly believe that this African initiative merits the support of the international community to enable Africa to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic in all its ramifications.

The enormity of the HIV/AIDS pandemic as a global developmental crisis and the important role of international efforts in finding a solution are some of the reasons for the planned special session of the General Assembly, scheduled for June this year. My delegation welcomes this global initiative. The special session, in the view of the Nigerian delegation, will provide an appropriate forum for the evaluation of the various programmes of action the world has so far been engaged in. We also hope it will generate the appropriate political commitment at the highest levels

and strengthen international cooperation and coordination.

In this connection, the pronouncements of world leaders at the Millennium Summit, as contained in the Millennium Declaration, provide the requisite reference point. In that Declaration, our leaders resolved to halt and reverse the trend of HIV/AIDS and halve the number of people living with the disease by 2015. This provides the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly with a framework for the development of its ultimate objectives — hence the necessity for the identification of priority areas for intensified action. This should include such areas as prevention, better access to care and treatment, and an increased level of national resource allocation, which is needed for addressing the problem in a holistic manner.

In view of the obvious implications the spread of HIV/AIDS has for peacekeeping operations, my delegation is of the opinion that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should embark on a massive information campaign to educate United Nations peacekeepers on the HIV/AIDS pandemic before they are deployed in the field. This recommendation has been made several times by the United Nations Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. Indeed, the United States delegation had openly threatened, in the Security Council, to veto any Security Council peacekeeping mandate that did not provide for such a programme, and we support that position.

Furthermore, we wish to suggest that troop-contributing countries should be equally assisted with information materials for their troops, and also assisted with resources to enable their countries to provide adequate medical facilities for their infected soldiers who served as United Nations peacekeepers, upon termination of their service.

It would also be appreciated if the Secretariat and the Security Council, during their consultation with troop-contributing countries, could provide data on the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in a particular field of operation, before the troops are deployed. This would facilitate the taking of preventive measures by troop-contributing countries before the departure of their troops.

At this juncture, let me pay tribute to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno and Dr. Peter Piot for their insightful briefings this morning. We are happy to note the commencement of cooperation between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) in their efforts to contain the spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic among United Nations peacekeepers.

During this period of unprecedented knowledge and general development in medical science in the world, we are convinced that the problems posed by this disease can be successfully solved. In this regard we must, first, open a new chapter in human history by jointly fashioning an appropriate solution to this devastating epidemic; and secondly, intensify international cooperation and mobilize all segments of society, including the private companies, which have made some breakthroughs on certain drugs, to provide such drugs at concessionary rates to the developing countries.

In conclusion, let me say that there can be no better farewell tribute to our friend Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, through whose initiative the narrow definition of security within the Security Council was expanded to include the threat of HIV/AIDS to global security. He brought the subject to the front burner, albeit in terms of an African problem. We know today that it is no longer an African problem but a world problem, as its impact is being felt even in the United States, as it is in all other parts of the world. We would like to commend his courage and the foresight of his colleagues in accepting his viewpoint at the time. In his honour, this effort must be kept alive until the war against HIV/AIDS is won.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of India. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sharma (India): I see you, Mr. President, and members of the Council looking at me with some alarm, but I speak on the trochaic principle: the short follows the long. We are happy that you have been detained for a day to preside over this Council meeting. We gain by your presence, as we did from that of the Minister of International Development of Norway, Ms. Ann Kristin Sydnes.

In resolution 1308 (2000), the Council, bearing in mind its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, stressed that HIV/AIDS, if unchecked, may pose a threat to stability and security. We have tried to follow the Council's reasoning, because AIDS is not, and has not been, a cause of conflict; no country has gone to war because

of AIDS. Resolution 1308 (2000), of course, made no such claim, but it did say that the pandemic is also exacerbated by conditions of violence and instability. The evidence does not support this either.

In Africa, the area of gravest concern, the countries with the highest prevalence of HIV/AIDS are, without exception, democracies with stable recent histories, either completely or largely free of conflict. The countries in conflict, including those where peacekeeping operations are based or planned, are in fact far less affected. They have frightening problems brought on by conflict, but a higher incidence of AIDS is not among them. There is, in fact, a published study which found that in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the country that, sadly, has been in the most violent upheaval over the last decade, "HIV prevalence rates have remained relatively unchanged in selected populations despite the political instability and poor environment observed since 1991 in DRC." Even taken with caution, because data may not be either reliable or complete in an area of conflict, this finding shows that there is no organic link between conflict and AIDS.

This should not surprise the Council. In resolution 1308 (2000), it noted the importance of epidemiology, and studies throughout the world, which confirm that HIV/AIDS has spread fastest in peaceful, settled societies, show that it travels rapidly along commercial arteries, such as truck routes; through tourism, particularly the sordid phenomenon of sex tourism; in countries with large concentrations of expatriate workers separated from their families; in societies where it is traditional for teenage girls to have sexual relations with much older men; and through intravenous drug abuse. Almost by definition, these patterns are generally either absent from or cannot coexist with, conditions of violence and instability. Commerce, tourism and expatriate workers all flee from conflict, which also forces changes in traditional patterns of social behaviour.

The Council expressed its concern at the potential damaging impact of HIV/AIDS on, and by implication through, peacekeepers, and asked that they be given training on AIDS issues. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations has recommended pre-deployment orientation on AIDS issues. However, we would find unfortunate the imputation that peacekeepers are either necessarily at risk or carriers of the disease. India has participated in almost every peacekeeping operation, and certainly in every operation set up by the United Nations in Africa. Not one Indian peacekeeper has either arrived in theatre in Africa with HIV/AIDS or left with it. Our soldiers have died in Africa and elsewhere of diseases — most recently in Sierra Leone from a particularly virulent form of cerebral malaria — but not one has died of AIDS. Preventive measures are part of the preparation and discipline that all good peacekeeping forces must have.

Singling out HIV/AIDS awareness for peacekeepers, as the Council has done in its recent resolutions, is not only needless, it presents a misleading picture of the problems that peacekeepers face and must prepare for. If peacekeepers are properly trained and disciplined, AIDS awareness will come, too. If they are not, they and the operation will fail.

We are puzzled, therefore, by the case that the Council is making, but, if it wishes to make a difference, it must take action where it can. Over the last year it has felt it justified to go well beyond its Charter mandate in investigating, and laying down conditions for, the international trade in diamonds in order to root out the trade in blood diamonds, which constitute less than 4 percent of the global trade but help to finance conflicts in Africa. The international trade has cooperated with the Council to prove its bona fides and to help relieve human suffering.

The problem of the treatment of AIDS also boils down to one of trade. A small group of pharmaceutical companies invoke the provisions of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) to deny affordable medicines to the vast numbers of patients, particularly in Africa, who cannot pay what is charged. Cheaper generic alternatives are available, but TRIPS is used to stop their export. Millions, therefore — far, far more than the numbers killed by conflict diamonds — are being condemned to a painful death through the policies of these pharmaceutical companies.

The massive number of people who will die from AIDS, if they do not get treatment, could indeed create a security problem for several of the Governments most directly concerned. In some of the countries most affected, the young and the middle-aged are being decimated. Societies face the terrible problem of having destitute old people and bereft orphans left saddled with the responsibility of looking after each other.

Societies that have been exemplars of peaceful development could easily slip into turmoil, or conflict, or become vulnerable to others, and indeed the fear is that this is what the looming crisis will produce. This is how we see and understand the reference made by Ambassador Holbrooke this morning to a broadened definition of security which guides our deliberation. If AIDS is a security problem, this is how it will emerge. We appreciate the point made by the Permanent Representative of France, Ambassador Levitte, this morning, concerning the unacceptable pricing of pharmaceutical products from the North that are intended for consumption in the South; and here, the Council can help.

Members of the Council will know that the TRIPS Agreement contains a provision for security exceptions. Article 73 reads, in part,

"Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed:

b) to prevent a Member from taking any action which it considered necessary for the protection of its essential security interests;

(iii) taken in time of war or other emergency in international relations; or

c) to prevent a Member from taking any action in pursuance of its obligations under the United Nations Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security."

I put it to this Council that, if it believes, as it has said, that HIV/AIDS is a threat to international peace and security, it has not only the right but also the duty, bearing in mind its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, to rule that article 73 of the TRIPS Agreement must be invoked to urgently provide affordable medicines that help in the treatment of the epidemic.

I have listened with great interest to Under-Secretary General Guéhenno, to Dr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, and to members of the Security Council, in particular to Ambassador Richard Holbrooke. My country completely supports the global campaign against this scourge and is determined to work with this campaign and to augment it, cognizant of the importance and gravity of the task. We endorse the stress laid by the Secretary-General on this issue.

In conclusion, Mr. President, may I take this opportunity to wish Ambassador Holbrooke and his family well and all success and distinction in his future endeavours; we have become quite accustomed to such success and distinction. I would be grateful if the delegation of the United States would kindly convey our sincere sentiments of best wishes and goodwill to Ambassador Holbrooke. To say that we will miss him in the United Nations is an understatement.

The President: I will now make a statement in my capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore.

Let me first thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno and Dr. Peter Piot for their informative remarks. They have reminded us that the HIV/AIDS pandemic is a subject that requires urgent action by the international community.

When this subject was first raised in the Security Council one year ago, 33 million people were affected by the HIV/AIDS virus. Today, the latest figures released by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) show an increase of 3 million, or a total of 36 million people infected. These are startling statistics. I do not think that it is an exaggeration to describe the HIV/AIDS pandemic as the black death of the new millennium. It is clear that despite our best efforts, more needs to be done.

I therefore applaud the foresight of Ambassador Holbrooke and his pioneering efforts in bringing the HIV/AIDS issue before the Security Council. By raising the political signature of this issue and by encouraging concrete measures to address the problem through resolution 1308 (2000), the Council has sent a clear and unequivocal demonstration of its commitment to the crusade against HIV/AIDS.

After resolution 1308 (2000) was adopted in July last year, some were disappointed that its provisions were voluntary in nature. But we should not underestimate its historic importance. This was the first time the Security Council recognized a health issue as a threat to international peace and security. We are here therefore today to build on this achievement.

There is strong empirical evidence to suggest a nexus between the proliferation of armed conflict and the spread of HIV/AIDS. Populations ravaged and displaced by war are the most vulnerable, as they do not have access to adequate medical treatment. It is

precisely in such conditions that peacekeepers can make a difference. With the correct training in education and prevention of HIV/AIDS, peacekeepers can act as positive agents through playing an advocacy role in conflict areas. In this regard, we welcome the announcement of the memorandum of understanding between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and UNAIDS to strengthen their cooperation. We also thank DPKO and support their efforts in ensuring that effective pre-deployment orientation and training on HIV/AIDS is given to all United Nations peacekeepers.

A global epidemic requires global solutions. HIV/AIDS does not distinguish between race, creed or nationality. It cannot be dealt with in isolation. The multisectoral approach practised by UNAIDS is the right way forward. We commend the untiring efforts and leadership demonstrated by UNAIDS on this issue. Ultimately, however, the onus falls on national Governments to establish effective strategies to deal with the HIV/AIDS crisis. In the preface of its report on HIV/AIDS, UNAIDS rightly points out that

> "While international political, financial and technical support are important, lowering the incidence and mitigating the epidemic's impact must be a nationally driven agenda."

The fruits of an effective national strategy are plain for all to see. Successes enjoyed by Uganda and Thailand are well documented. Key lessons we can draw include a need for strong political commitment from the highest levels and taking a broad-based approach to implementing preventive measures. It is essential that such best practices are disseminated widely to all countries so that a global rollback of the HIV/AIDS pandemic is made possible.

Singapore is fortunate to have a low incidence of HIV/AIDS infection. Nonetheless, we have made prevention and treatment of the disease a high priority through a comprehensive national AIDS control programme. For example, HIV/AIDS education is given to every student, as well as to all national servicemen who serve in the uniformed services. Stringent measures are undertaken to safeguard the national blood supply. HIV/AIDS patients are given access to subsidized medical treatment and are counselled regularly. The Government also works closely with community groups to promote further training and research activities, to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS and to prevent discrimination against patients and families. At an international level, our health authorities cooperate with the World Health Organization to provide it with regular updates on the HIV/AIDS situation in Singapore.

Prevention, while crucial, is only one side of the coin. Equally important is the proper care and treatment of the 36 million people afflicted with the virus. Access to health care should not be separated from prevention. It is not right that victims in developing countries are denied the same level of health care made available to those from the developed world. When we consider that over 90 per cent of those suffering from HIV/AIDS reside in the developing world, the availability of affordable drugs and treatment must be made a top priority.

We are all aware of the deleterious effects of an HIV/AIDS epidemic on a country's economic capacity. Just as peace and stability in developing countries are threatened by this epidemic, their economic development and potential are also likewise crippled. While the Security Council can play a significant catalytic role in the fight against HIV/AIDS, the multidimensional effects of the epidemic can be represented only by UNAIDS. We therefore view today's debate as only one part of our wider struggle against the proliferation of the disease.

I resume my function as President of the Security Council.

I call on Mr. Guéhenno to respond to any comments raised.

Mr. Guéhenno: I would just like to say how heartened I have been and encouraged by the debate that took place today, and I would like to thank the members of the Council for their supportive statements of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and of our strengthened cooperation with UNAIDS. Such announcements as the one made by the Minister of International Development of Norway provide a tremendous boost to the efforts of all those in the United Nations system who want to take an ever more active role in the global war against AIDS.

I would also like to say, to borrow Ambassador Holbrooke's own words, that I did not take any of his remarks personally. On the contrary, I consider them as a reflection of the priority that he rightly attaches to the issue of HIV/AIDS, and I welcome the suggestions that

were made. Ambassador Holbrooke can be forceful in his criticism. He has also been effectively forceful in his support of peacekeeping, and for that I would like to put on record that he will enjoy the lasting gratitude of all peacekeepers. I would be grateful to the United States delegation if it would convey to the Ambassador our gratitude.

The President: The Security Council has concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4260

Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

4260th meeting

Friday, 19 January 2001, 5.15 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Jayakumar	(Singapore)
Members:	Bangladesh	Mr. Sorcar
	China	Mr. Wang Donghua
	Colombia	Mr. Ocaziones
	France	Mr. Teixeira da Silva
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Jamaica	Mr. Ward
	Mali	Mr. Konfourou
	Mauritius	Mr. Neewoor
	Norway	Mr. Strommen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Sergeev
	Tunisia	Mr. Cherif
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Stoffer

Agenda

International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

Letter dated 11 January 2001 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2001/61)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

01-22069 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 5.15 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

Letter dated 11 January 2001 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2001/61)

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2000/61, which contains the text of a letter dated 11 January 2001 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council regarding the nominations which have been received for permanent judges of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. In this connection, the members of the Council will note the information contained in the Secretary-General's letter.

Members of the Council also have before them the draft of a letter which I, as President of the Security Council, propose to send to the Secretary-General in reply to the aforementioned letter, informing him of the decision by the Council to extend the deadline for nominations of judges of the Tribunal until 31 January 2001.

In the absence of any objection, I shall assume that the Security Council agrees that I should send the letter as drafted to the Secretary-General.

It is so decided.

The reply will be issued as a document of the Council under the symbol S/2001/63.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.